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May 20, 2009



MONEY MATTERS

Our pull-out guide on ways to
make your money go further

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Top tips to help you feel good



'I'LL RETURN TO WORK A REAL WOMAN'

A **BARMAN** has become a barmaid after having a £20,000 sex change operation.

Elleigha Reed left regulars at the Wetherspoon's Leading Light pub in Faversham stunned after becoming a woman following the four-hour NHS procedure.

Elleigha – born Lee – always liked playing with Barbies and decided she no longer wanted to be a man at the age of 15 while a pupil at The Abbey School.

When she left a year later she changed her name by deed poll, started dressing in skirts and heels, and began working in the kitchens and then behind the bar at the pub in Preston Street.

EXCLUSIVE

BY EMILY HALL

The 20-year-old, of Bysing Wood, Faversham, finally had the op three weeks ago and is now considering returning to pull pints as a fully-fledged female.

She said: "When I first started growing up I never felt like the other kids, I felt different. I never wanted to do boy stuff like climbing trees or playing with cars, I wanted to play with Barbies."

"I was really little and I remember seeing a programme on TV where there was a woman, but it turned out

to be a man and I just thought 'wow, that's me'.

"I decided to keep wearing boys' uniform at school but as soon as I left at 16 I changed my name to Elleigha and started working in the kitchen at Wetherspoons."

"No-one batted an eyelid. My work colleagues were fine, very supportive and if customers were rude they would tell them they weren't welcome in the pub."

Elleigha is one of 400 people a year who opt for sex change surgery in Britain. Patients must undergo two years of psychological evaluation, with psychiatrists making sure they are not mentally ill or just dressing as a woman for kicks.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



SEX CHANGE: Elleigha Reed is looking forward to returning to her job behind the bar

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TOP TV CLIPS



1 Thousands were in Faversham at the weekend for its annual classic cars show. **Search 'cars'**



2 Thanet South Conservative candidate Laura Sandys' warning over large-scale GP clinics. **Search 'Sandys'**



3 Gills boss Mark Stimson looks ahead to the play-off final at Wembley. **Search 'Gillingham'**

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Office plan for historic house sparks protest

■ BY EMILY HALL

PLANS to turn a historic Georgian house into offices have met with fierce opposition from residents.

Grade II-listed Mall House is one of Faversham's oldest homes and its owners want it turned into office space for up to 22 workers.

Although currently empty, many say the imposing property, which dates from 1743 but has earlier Elizabethan parts, is of such interest that, if sold, it should remain a home and not be altered to suit businesses.

A recent planning application shows minor alterations to the interior, but part of the original walled garden could be flattened to create parking for up to 18 cars.

Cheryl Maw, of nearby Nelson Gardens, said she and many others were opposed to the application.

She said: "There are a number of empty commercial properties which would benefit from new business moving in.

"This would help rejuvenate our

town centre and give these premises a new lease of life.

"The Mall House should be left as a residential property and its gardens left intact. If a precedent is set in this conservation area it will open the flood gates for further applications."

Adam Binns, who lives close to the house in The Mall, added: "Mall House has only had two owners since 1902 which shows the quality of the home for family occupation.

"Built in 1743 and grade II listed, it is one of the most important and historic properties in the area.

"It has classical Georgian house proportions and damaging these by converting to office use and developing parking areas would be an unforgivable blight on our heritage."

Robert Lamoon, of London Road, Faversham, fumed: "The number of staff using this office would mean creating a car park within the gardens. This is unacceptable."

The owners are thought to have had trouble selling the house because of the property slump.

A spokeswoman for Swale council said the application would be determined by June 17.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Gardeners put their questions to panel

TWO keen gardeners from Faversham will be making an appearance on one of the BBC's most enduring radio shows next month.

Sue Davidson and Janet Killian will be putting their queries to the expert panel on Radio 4's Gardener's Question Time, which is broadcast at 3pm on Friday, June 19, and repeated two days later, at 2pm.

The show has been aired since 1947 and in that time has answered more than 30,000 questions on all things horticultural.

Previously the panel was shown the questions in advance, but now panelists have to answer with no prior knowledge.

Films reveal footage of town in 1930s

A NEW donation has been made to the Faversham Museum in the form of a Pathescope PBX cine projector dating from around 1930.

It is operated by hand and came with 30 short films, each lasting about two and a half minutes.

Some of the films show members of the Pollock family who owned the shipyard at Upper Brents and it is believed that the previous owner of the projector may have worked for them.

Other recent donations include postcards of East Street and Preston Street in the early 20th century.

Sign up for day out at house and grounds

THE Faversham Society is organising a trip to the gardens at Great Dixter Hall on July 26.

The building in Northiam, East Sussex, is one of the largest medieval timber-framed halls in the country and was enlarged by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the early 20th century.

It is well-known for its exotic garden, walled garden and water features as well as a wild meadow.

Details of the trip can be obtained from the Fleur de Lis centre in Preston Street.

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Spirit of the open road at free-wheeling show

■ BY NICK AMES

THOUSANDS thronged the town centre on Sunday to view the hundreds of classic cars and motorcycles on display.

Vehicles on show included an American sheriff's pursuit car, a vintage Bentley, a replica of Del Boy's famous yellow Reliant from TV's *Only Fools and Horses*, and a Routemaster London bus which took visitors on a trip around town.

A jazz band played and children's entertainment ranged from a Punch and Judy show to a graffiti artist.

Lawrence Young, of Faversham Enterprise Partnership, said: "It was a fantastic day and the rain held off after an initial shower."

"What struck me was how friendly everyone was. Many people just wandered around and chatted to the car owners and admired the vehicles on display. The Routemaster was new this year and proved very popular."

The top of Preston Street was given over to classic American vehicles, including Cadillacs, Chevrolets and the police car, which had an Alabama registration plate but was actually discovered in Somerset.

Other owners had found their vehicles on internet auction sites and bought them in a sorry state – before tuning them up and getting the paintwork gleaming.

Owners were always willing to talk about their machines to passers-by, and a Saracen armoured personnel carrier acquired from the



Picture: NICK AMES

HORSEPOWER: A boy admires a Ford Mustang, one of the classic cars on show in the streets of Faversham at the weekend

British Army by the town's Air Training Corps, received particular attention.

In the town centre, traditional British family cars from the early days of motoring were on display.

Ann Moore, from Whitstable, said: "I find modern family cars a bit boring to be honest – these really are far more interesting."

"They seem to have personality which more functional vehicles lack."

"I really can't see people at a show in 30 years'

time enthusing about a Nissan."

In the Market Square, the motorcycles attracted an enthusiastic crowd of mainly younger spectators.

"There's nothing like a bike," said Peter Woods from Ashford, who was admiring a Triumph Bonneville.

"Riding the open road is totally different on two wheels. The sensation of speed and the exhilaration are far more than you can ever get sitting behind a steering wheel."

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Under the bonnet at Faversham's popular car show. Search 'car'

Sheps quenches the Pope's thirst

THE Pope's favourite tippie is Shepherd Neame's Spitfire ale, according to celebrity priest Father Michael Seed.

A gossip column in a national newspaper has reported that the cleric sends beer mats to the Vatican as Easter or Christmas gifts for His Holiness.

Ephraim Hardcastle's offering in the Daily Mail goes on to say that German-born Pope Benedict XVI has a fondness for Spitfire, which is brewed in Faversham.

Shepherd Neame said the Pope's choice was unexpected as Spitfire's famous tongue-in-cheek, Dad's Army-style advertising includes slogans such as 'No Fokker Comes Close' and 'Goering, Goering, Gone'.

A Sheps spokesman said: "The Pope isn't the first German to down a Spitfire, but certainly the most famous."

Peaches in pants

SOCIALITE Peaches Geldof has stripped off to model underwear for Ultimo's latest campaign.

The 20-year-old, who also works as a TV presenter and a DJ, has been pictured wearing the lingerie in fashion magazines and newspaper supplements.

The daughter of singer and anti-poverty campaigner Bob Geldof, who lives at Davington Priory, revealed she does not have to workout to stay in shape for her modeling career.

She said: "I'm still young, I'm sure that when I reach, like, 25 or something, I'll have to start working out more."

Peaches added she was happy with her figure: "I was brought up to embrace my body. I'm just normal, you know, so I've always felt fine with it."

But Mr Geldof has been reported as being less than happy with his daughter for posing for the saucy shots.

'I always felt I was in the wrong body'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Elleigha started taking hormones to boost her cleavage and stop hair growth last year and shortly afterwards heard she was suitable for the op.

She now hopes to follow it up with a boob job and facial surgery with the full support of her parents and brother and sister.

"I always felt I was in the wrong body," she said.

"Since being off to have the op I've really missed the customers at the pub and the attention from the regulars."

"Blokes wolf-whistle at me all the time, even walking into town today a lorry full of lads stopped to talk to me and they asked me for my number. It's a good feeling."

Although Elleigha will be off work recovering for up to three months, her former shift manager Michael McHugh said: "She was a great worker, one of the best, so we never thought twice about whether she was a man or a woman. We just hope she comes back after she's recovered."

Pub regular Dave Lister added: "We really don't care what sex she is. She's a looker either way."

Getting the message across in speed blitz

DRIVERS flouting the speed limit on a stretch of the A2 were caught out during a police road check.

Motorcycle traffic officers patrolled the road between The Mall and Love Lane, Faversham, on Sunday after Yoursware highlighted speeding problems last week.

Residents were pleased when the speed limit was dropped from 40mph to 30mph about a year ago – but since then few motorists seem to have noticed the change and continue at speeds of up to 50mph.

This has left homeowners – many with young children – too scared to cross the road.

PC Dave Towner, of Kent Police's mid Kent motorcycle team, said: "We completed a 60-minute road check on Sunday and 12 drivers were advised about their speed, with a further two receiving penalties."

"We were well received by residents and will continue to conduct road checks in this area."

"Several sites for an enforcement day have been identified which will deal with traffic in both directions."

Meanwhile Hugh Robertson, Conservative MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, has presented a 400-signature petition to the Department

for Transport calling for further speed enforcement. He attended a demonstration near Salters Lane, Faversham, earlier this month.

The police have pledged to work with Kent Highways and the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership to tackle speeding.

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Residents living by the A2 talk about speeding. Search 'protest'

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Plot thickens after raid on crime author's home

CRIME author Lesley Cookman found herself at the centre of a real-life investigation while writing her latest book after thieves broke into her Whitstable home.

The intruders stole valuables including her laptop, which held the first draft of her latest crime novel, *Murder in Bloom*. They even stole her keys and drove off in her car.

The burglary, which took place earlier this year, did not delay the completion of *Murder in Bloom*, which Mrs Cook was able to finish from back-up files stored elsewhere.

The book is released this month.

Rock-solid support for cathedral stonemasons

TWO apprentice stonemasons working on Canterbury Cathedral have each been given £3,000 by the Freemasons of East Kent to help with further training.

Emlyn Harris and Ben Swinfield demonstrated their skills to the Masons at their provincial garden party last year.

They were so impressed that members decided to donate £3,000 each to the stonemasons, intended to pay for further training as they help restore the cathedral.

Nursing home inspectors award three-star rating

HIGHFIELD nursing home has received a top rating after an inspection by the Care Quality Commission.

The home in Bekesbourne Lane, Canterbury, was rated excellent in five out of six categories including areas such as health and personal care and activities.

Highfield was awarded three stars by the independent commission, the highest rating. The home, which is owned by Southern Cross healthcare, looks after elderly people, employing a staff of 28.

Hullabaloo's party time

POPULAR party band Hullabaloo will be gigging in Whitstable tomorrow (Thursday).

The Kent-based group have their own take on popular music, with a line-up that includes double bass, drums and guitar.

The gig is at High Street venue Deco 5.

Tickets are £15, and include a drink and a buffet. To book, call 01227 770079.

City's Olympic hopes on sisters' shoulders

■ BY JENNY ARMSTRONG

TWO gymnastic sisters who have already enjoyed international success could be Canterbury's contribution to the 2012 Olympics.

Keziah (14) and Jael Gore (12) are rhythmic gymnasts who live and train in Canterbury.

Keziah has already competed in international competitions including the Australian Youth Olympics in January, where she took the individual silver.

She was also one of four gymnasts who contributed towards Great Britain's team bronze.

Both Keziah and Jael have won the British championships. In 2006 they both won their age groups, claiming the under-nine and under-12 titles.

The girls have to train very hard to achieve their success. During term time they practise for four hours on Mondays and three hours on other days after school. They also train for seven hours on Saturdays.

During the holidays they train six hours a day, four or five days a week. When they train with other international gymnasts at the national



IN THE LOOP: Keziah Gore in action

sports centre they train six hours a day for anything between four and seven days.

The girls' mother, Jo Gore, said: "They love it when they win but are satisfied not to win medals if they have performed well. They generally enjoy training but it is a huge commitment. It is a lot of hard work, and at times there is a lot of pressure as well."

The sisters started gymnastics young, Keziah when she was eight and Jael at just six. Both are members of the City of Canterbury Rhythmic Gymnastics Club.

Keziah hopes to compete in the Commonwealth games in 2010, followed by the World Championships in 2011 and the London Olympics in 2012.

As well as the training, the sisters have a lot to contend with if they want to succeed as international athletes. Jael recently sustained an injury which prevented her from competing in the British championships.

Their parents also have to bear the brunt of national and international travel costs, as well as leotards which can cost as much as £200 and £20 toe shoes which wear out after a month.

Mrs Gore said: "Sport is very good for my children in discipline and making friends. Not many children their age have had their experiences abroad. It's a fantastic opportunity and keeps them fit and healthy."



SPORTING CHANCE: Gymnast Keziah Gore

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GREEN CHURCH: Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams has spoken out on environmental issues

Looking after Earth is the Church's duty

DESPITE the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermons on environmental responsibility churches get no financial help from the Church of England to go green.

Ancient buildings are notoriously difficult to heat and light, with draughty rooms, poor insulation and decrepit heating systems.

Canterbury Cathedral is a case in point.

Christopher Robinson, spokesman for Canterbury Cathedral, said: "We had an audit to recommend ways of reducing energy use.

"Some of the suggestions are easy, but with a Grade I listed building and ceilings 80ft high, it is not easy to fit insulation without having a major impact on the architecture.

"We are looking at ways of replacing our interior lighting to reduce energy use, but the cost is very high."

Vicars in Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay agree with Archbishop Dr Rowan Williams and some churches are already starting to do what they can with the resources they have.

The Rev Steve Coneys, of the Seasalter parish, said: "It's the single most important issue facing humanity. Concern for the envi-

BY JENNY ARMSTRONG

ronment is rooted in the second chapter of Genesis – to look after and care for the Earth.

"It is something humanity in general, the Church included, has abused. Exploiting the planet is not what we're told to do."

Worshippers at the Church of St Cosmus and St Damian in the Blean have drawn up an environmental plan which includes recycling, lower-carbon heating methods, cycle racks near the church and encouraging wildlife in the grounds.

All Saints' Church in Whitstable has a nature reserve in the churchyard, and St Bartholomew's at Herne Bay has created gardens, planted trees and recycles.

David Shreeve, Church of England national environment advisor and co-founder of the Conservation Foundation, said: "Each church is an independent unit and while the central body of the Church of England is not able to make grants, it obviously encourages each one to do what it can.

"There are lot of simple things churches can do, such as looking at insulation and draught-proofing, before they can go to the huge expense of big projects."



DEEP TROUBLE: Wincheap Lib Dem Cllr Martin Vye demonstrates how hazardous the pothole is

The depths of despair over huge pothole in city street

A DANGEROUS pothole has opened up in the Wincheap area of Canterbury, but so far no-one from the Highways Agency has even been to inspect it, claim local people.

The pothole is only about six inches in diameter but nearly 18 inches deep. It remains unrepaired and with neither warning signs nor a cordon.

The hole, in Guildford Road near the busy junction with Martyrs Field Road, is causing concern to road-users and locals.

Potholes are also a problem in nearby Cogans Terrace and other roads in Wincheap, where recent repairs have already failed.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Ex-prison officer arrested on drug smuggling charge

A FORMER prison officer from Herne Bay has been charged with smuggling drugs into Elmley Prison on the Isle of Sheppey.

Ex-Serco employee Zoe Spenser-Campbell, 25, of High Street, was charged with conspiracy to supply controlled drugs. Her boyfriend, Jason Howsam, 26, was also charged.

Officers arrested the pair after a joint investigation by Kent Police and HMP Elmley. They were questioned at Canterbury police station while officers searched two houses in Herne Bay. Howsam was remanded in custody to appear before Canterbury magistrates. Spenser-Campbell was bailed to appear at the same hearing.

A Serco official said: "I can confirm one of the arrested individuals was a member of our staff who is no longer employed by the company."

Bethell's home off website

PAEDOPHILE Barry Bethell's bungalow could remain on the market for some time after the For Sale sign was hidden and the pervert's ex-home was removed from the estate agent's website.

The sale board outside the Kimberly Grove bungalow – where the former DJ abused his victim – has been hidden in a bush, while the advert on the website was removed shortly after the publication of our story last week. Bethell will be sentenced on June 5 for sexually assaulting a 10-year-old girl and taking indecent photographs of her.

He was convicted by a jury at Canterbury Crown Court two weeks ago, but acquitted of a second set of charges involving another girl.

Cop an earful at concerts

THE Alzheimer's Society is holding a week-end of music in Herne next month.

The weekend will include concerts by the Kent Police Band on Friday, June 12, and the Kent Police Male Voice Choir the following day. The concerts are at St Martin's Church and both start at 7.30pm.

Tickets, available on 01227 730000, cost £8 per night or £15 for both nights, including interval refreshments. Proceeds will support dementia sufferers and their carers.

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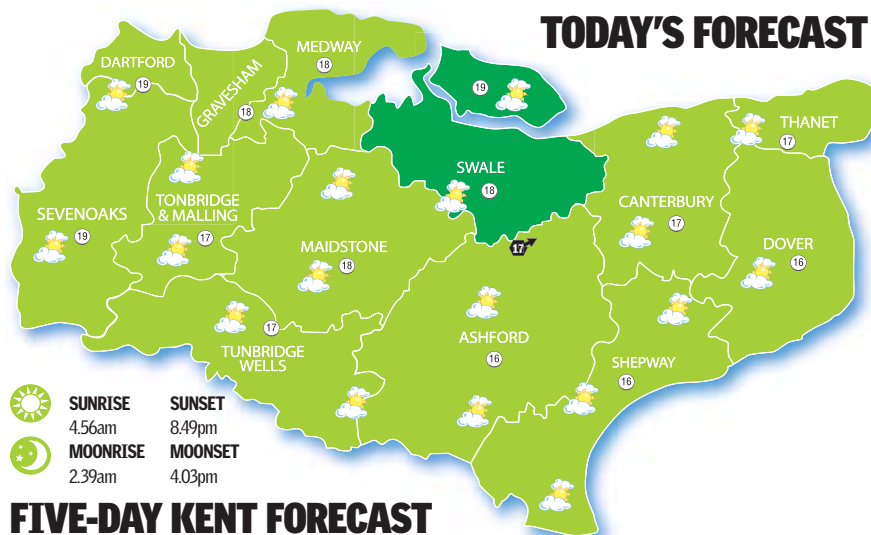
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FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	16°C	19°C	19°C	16°C	18°C	Gravesend	17°C	19°C	19°C	17°C	19°C
Canterbury	16°C	18°C	18°C	16°C	18°C	Maidstone	16°C	18°C	19°C	17°C	18°C
Chatham	16°C	18°C	17°C	15°C	16°C	Ramsgate	16°C	18°C	18°C	16°C	18°C
Dartford	17°C	19°C	19°C	17°C	19°C	Rochester	16°C	18°C	17°C	15°C	16°C
Dover	15°C	16°C	16°C	15°C	16°C	Sevenoaks	15°C	17°C	17°C	16°C	16°C
Faversham	16°C	18°C	17°C	15°C	16°C	Sittingbourne	16°C	18°C	17°C	15°C	16°C
Folkestone	15°C	16°C	16°C	15°C	16°C	Tonbridge	15°C	18°C	19°C	17°C	18°C
Gillingham	16°C	18°C	17°C	15°C	16°C	Tun Wells	15°C	18°C	19°C	17°C	18°C



WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	12:38pm	5.8m
	Sunday	1:22pm	6.0m
Dover	Saturday	10:38am	6.3m
	Sunday	11:23am	6.5m
Dungeness	Saturday	10:57am	7.2m
	Sunday	11:39am	7.5m
Ramsgate	Saturday	11:08am	4.8m
	Sunday	11:53am	4.9m
Sheerness	Saturday	12:27pm	5.6m
	Sunday	1:12pm	5.7m
Whitstable	Saturday	12:27pm	5.0m
	Sunday	1:13pm	5.1m



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	16°C	Madrid	23°C
Athens	27°C	New York	13°C
Barcelona	20°C	Paris	17°C
Beijing	34°C	Rome	24°C
Bombay	33°C	Sydney	20°C
Cape Town	17°C	Tenerife	23°C
Cardiff	12°C	Tokyo	27°C
Gibraltar	23°C	Vancouver	21°C
Hong Kong	33°C	Warsaw	21°C
Las Palmas	23°C	Wellington	12°C

Who will you be voting for in the county council elections on June 4?

THE candidates for the upcoming Kent County Council elections in Swale have been announced.

The Faversham electoral division will be contested by Shirley Allen (UKIP), Tom Gates (Conservative Party), Gary Miller (Green Party), Trevor Payne (Labour and Co-operative Party), and Stephen Rowlestone (Liberal Democrats).

The Sheerness seat will be fought by David Cassidy (Independent), Angela Harrison (Labour Party), Colin Howe (Liberal Democrats), Ken Pugh (Conservative Party), and Graeme Sergeant (BNP).

For the Sheppey electoral division Adrian Crowther (Conservative Party), Colin McCarthy Stewart (BNP), Patricia Sandle (Independent), David Sargent (Labour Party), David Spurling (Liberal Democrats), and Mad Mike Young (Official Monster Raving Looney Party) are standing.

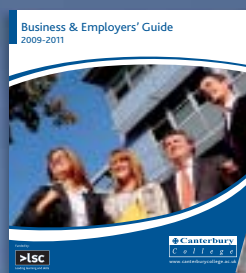
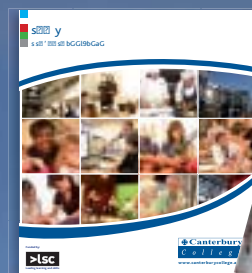
The Swale Central electoral division will be contested by Dave Manning (Liberal Democrats), Sheikh Mihand (Official Monster Raving Looney Party), Keith Nevols (Liberal Democrats), Roger Truelove (Labour Party), Ghlin Whelan (Labour Party), Mike Whiting (Conservative Party), and Alan Willicombe (Conservative Party).

The Swale East seat will be fought by Andrew Bowles (Conservative Party), David Evans (Liberal Democrats), Sarah Larkins (UKIP), Ken Rowles (Labour Party), and Timothy Valentine (Green Party).

For the Swale West electoral division, people will be asked to vote for Mike Baldock (Labour Party), Keith Ferrin (Conservative Party), or Elvie Lowe (Liberal Democrats).

Voting takes place on Thursday, June 4 and counting will take place the following day.

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QUESTION & ANSWER

DUNCAN GALLOWAY



Q Tell us a little about yourself

A I am the lead singer and band leader of the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

Q How did you first become involved in the Pasadena Roof Orchestra?

A I first heard of the orchestra in the 1980s and had always admired the music of the dance-band era. I first came across it on Dennis Potter's TV series Pennies From Heaven.

Q What is it like to be in a modern swing and dance orchestra?

A I suspect the rigours of being on the road on tour in the 1920s and 30s is not much different from today. Instead of a tour bus, we tend to fly quite a lot these days, which is an experience I don't enjoy.

The reward for all that time spent in queues for security, queues for coffee, queues for boarding, is seeing so many different places. I would hate, however, to have a milometer fitted on me – I fear it would be over the million mark by now.

Q What would you say has been your most memorable or exciting experience so far?

A One of my most memorable experiences is sailing into Sydney harbour on the P&O

cruise-liner Oriana's maiden world voyage. It is a naturally beautiful bay, and the opera house is a modern wonder of the world.

Working with the Pasadena Roof Orchestra has become almost a life passion for me. In my time with the band I have met some extraordinary musicians and some extraordinary characters.

Music, especially jazz music, is a lot about listening to what the others are doing around you. It is probably as important, if not more so, than what you do yourself.

During my time with the band, I have had the benefit of listening to some great players. In this respect I have been very privileged.

Q How did you become involved in showbusiness?

A I trained as an actor at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art. I have had some great experiences in the thespian world, including visiting the Taj Mahal and being a founder member of the Stadium Theatre Company when P&O Cruises put a repertory company to sea. My first world cruise was on a lovely ship, SS Canberra.

I was always keen on singing and play saxophone and clarinet myself, so the progression from actor to musician was quite logical. I have performed in a few musicals, including Guys and Dolls, and Les Miserables. I sometimes get the urge to do a serious dramatic role again, but it soon passes!

Q Have you been to Folkestone before and what do you know of the area?

A The Pasadena Roof Orchestra have played at Folkestone before, including most recently in March. More information about the orchestra can be found at the website www.pasadena.co.uk. It has a brief history of the band, a picture gallery, tour dates and other essential information.

Q What do you like to do in your spare time when you're not working?

A When I am not queuing up at an airport I am a keen golfer and happy attempting to lower my handicap at my club near Cambridge. I also spend a fair bit of time helping my wife's business which we jointly own, called The Cambridge Sushi Company. We supply really good-quality sushi to the colleges, canteens and offices in and around the city. The proof of this is the fact that I still enjoy eating it after sometimes seeing so much of it. You can find out more at www.cambridge-sushi.com.

Q Tell us something that people don't tend to know about you

A I used to play cricket to a fairly good level. I was once a wicketkeeper/batsman and my claim to fame was getting Mark Ramprakash out twice in one delivery. I stumped him down the leg side and he also got an edge. I asked the umpire at the bowler's end if he heard it and he said he didn't, but I know the truth!

The lead singer of the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, who entertained so hugely at Folkestone's Leas Cliff Hall, spoke to **James Alexandre** about being on tour, delivering sushi and bowling out an England cricketer

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School takes part in a world skipping record attempt. Search 'skipping'.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

You can view all these videos and others from around the county with the click of a mouse at...

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Fired Mona admits gay was wrong for Margate

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

FORMER beauty queen Mona Lewis says she should have trusted her knowledge of Kent to avoid being booted off The Apprentice.

The 28-year-old from Sittingbourne was the latest candidate to be told "You're fired" by Sir Alan Sugar on the popular BBC One show



NOT IMPRESSED: Sir Alan Sugar

last Wednesday night, after her team failed in its attempts to re-brand Margate.

Mona said she felt her team made the wrong decision in attempting to promote the gritty seaside town as a haven for gay people, and she

wishes she had fought harder against the idea: "Being a resident of Kent and knowing more about it than the others, I thought it would be better to target the family market because Margate has a lot of family heritage, it's receiving a lot of investment and there are major things going on."

"I wish I had fought harder against the gay idea because I thought it limited the market. You can be gay and still be part of a family."

Despite Mona's opposition to her team's idea, Sir Alan revealed on the show how the branding experts and residents who acted as judges for the task were supportive of it.

What they were less impressed with was the shoddily-produced leaflet and cluttered series of posters that accompanied the campaign.

Mona was fired from the show after being brought back into the boardroom with project manager Debra Barr and former commercial manager James McQuillan.

She said: "I was fired because Sir Alan felt I wasn't fully backing up the team and also because he could not see where he could fit me into his operation."

"I think the time was right for me to leave



GAY RESORT? Apprentice Mona (inset) admits she should have promoted Margate to families

because I really missed my little boy and eight weeks was a long time to be away from him, so I was happy in that respect."

Mona, who was born in Karachi, Pakistan, and is a former financial manager, now works for Business Link to help Kent firms capitalise on the 2012 Olympics.

She said that "only time will tell" if her time on The Apprentice would help or hinder her job prospects but that she was pleased with the way she came across on the show.

Experience

Mona said: "It was definitely an experience to be on The Apprentice and it was quite an honour to be selected, especially as I have only lived in the country for four years."

"I never claimed to be good at creating or designing things, but I'm so pleased I was able to show off my selling and negotiating skills and I think I acted with dignity and professionalism at all times."

National accounts manager Lorraine Tighe is now Kent's only representative left.

The next episode of The Apprentice can be seen at 9pm tonight on BBC One.

Dover girl is Capt Kirk's midwife

IT'S a long way from Dover to the Starship Enterprise – but one actress is enjoying the limelight after landing a role in the new Star Trek film.

Sonita Henry boldly went where no one has gone before in the movie – and secured a place in Trekkie folklore in the role of the alien doctor responsible for delivering baby James T Kirk.

Ms Henry grew up in Dover, with a British dad and Guyanese mum, and after attending Dover Girls Grammar, took a media studies course at South Kent College.

The 32-year-old swapped Kent for California in her 20s and has appeared in TV adverts in the US and had parts in films including The Fifth Element, Woody Allen flick Celebrity and TV series Without a Trace.

But the Star Trek movie – set before the TV series which spawned a host of big-screen outings for the original crew and a subsequent slew of spin-off series – is her highest-profile role to date.

Ms Henry told a US newspaper: "As an actor, you're like 'Great! Another job' and then it slowly begins to sink in that this isn't just another job... this is Star Trek."



TREKKIE: actress Sonita Henry

Kent's unfit cops

KENT'S rookie cops are the unfittest in Britain, according to Home Office figures just released.

Almost 17 per cent of probationers were sent packing after receiving sub-standard results for tests of stamina and upper-body strength.

Only Avon and Somerset cops posted similar results, followed by a failure rate of 10 per cent in Norfolk.



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Pick your own fruits and salads, beets and treats

FROM succulent strawberries to beetroot and asparagus, the Garden of England is set to reap plenty of rewards this summer for the pick-your-own season.

With a predicted spell of warm weather, there is renewed optimism from Kent growers who are anticipating strong crops and interest from a younger generation of customers.

Amid a wealth of TV gardening programmes and shows promoting healthier lifestyles, a greater number of people are embracing the five-a-day recommended dose of fruit and vegetables.

It all ties in perfectly with our 2009 campaign urging our readers to help protect the local economy by buying locally produced and supplied food and drink – spearheaded by our website www.foodforkent.co.uk, which unites the best producers under one online roof.

As a perennial favourite, demand for Kentish strawberries is particularly high. Martin Clews, of Stonepitts farm at Seal Chart, near Sevenoaks, is expecting a strong response to the company's latest crop available next month.

"Things are looking pretty good for this year. We took over the business 17 years ago and it's coming up to the 50th anniversary of the company now," he said. He added that despite a poor summer last year, the firm's long-established reputation had ensured its survival.

Despite its success with several strawberry varieties, Mr Clews explained the pick-your-own business has in recent years been suffering a decline since its peak in the



1980s. He believed this was largely due to a combination of poor summer weather and supermarket competition producing fruit all-year round.

"It's a shame we are the only people producing pick-your-own strawberries in this area, there used to be three or four others in this part of Kent when we first started out. We have had to move with the times and really ask people what strawberries they prefer, with the Old Cambridge being a real favourite – it goes back to the 60s and has a real old Englishness about it.

"This year we got in touch with more than 50 schools and my wife Jackie gave a lecture about how strawberries grow, and seeing the farm is a good way for them to learn."

Susie Mills, of Valley Arch pick-your-own

near Dartford was also enthused by the prospects for the new season. She explained they were anticipating a strong demand for its strawberry-growing run: "We are finding a lot of younger people are coming to do pick-your own these days, which is a good thing as it used to be mainly a more mature market. It's a nice thing for a family to do and there's nothing like having some local strawberries in the summer.

"As with all the produce we grow, it's much better than fruit and veg that has been frozen, where you lose a lot of the vitamins in the process."

Farm shops in the county have also reported significant interest in a wide range of locally grown summer crops.

Paula Everett of Macknade farm shop in Faversham said summer fruit and veg had been proving extremely popular. Sales of asparagus and strawberries (maturing early due to being grown in poly-tunnels) were also doing well.

The Kent firm's enthusiasm was also shared by the National Farmers' Retail & Markets Association (FARMA). It expected the UK to follow the American pick-your-own trend in being on course for a strong resurgence as customers find it an excellent way to get quality produce at the best prices.

"The time seems to be right for pick-your-own, reflecting the fact that people are prepared to 'do-it-themselves' to get quality and value," said Gareth Jones from FARMA.

He added: "Great value for money is just one of the advantages. The only other way to get such fresh and flavoursome produce is to grow it yourself."



A pedal-powered delivery

RECOGNISING how quickly the new season's asparagus is flying off the shelves, the manager of one hotel decided this week to go the extra mile to meet demand.

On Tuesday, David Sharma of Chartham Hatch's Howfield Manor Hotel, ensured next to no carbon footprint for the hotel's asparagus supplies.

Mr Sharma collected the asparagus grown in nearby Blean from the Goods Shed market in Canterbury before taking it back to Howfield Manor Hotel to be used in the restaurant, and he took the journey under pedal power on a bicycle.

It came about after Mr Sharma, who cycles to Howfield from Canterbury, found out the local supplier Charles Atkins delivers to the Goods Shed, but would be unable to deliver to the hotel. Keen to keep food miles down, and to avoid another delivery journey, Mr Sharma decided to pick up his order of asparagus every week of the season by bike.

Howfield Manor Hotel has recently submitted an application to join Produced in Kent – the organisation set up to promote local producers and suppliers – to demonstrate its commitment to using local produce and supporting its producers.

• For the latest offers of local asparagus see www.foodforkent.co.uk.

It's so easy to buy local

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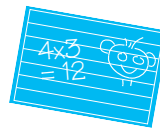
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BREAK TIME

House about that?



CHEQUE THIS OUT: Hayley Richardson with pupils Liam, Evangeline, Natasha and Lewis

FOUR pupils of a Sittingbourne school have presented a cheque for more than £700 to Demelza children's hospice.

A total of £723.62 was raised during a charity week at Fulston Manor School in March. Students in Morrison house took part in activities including cake sales, a sponsored silence, a silly socks and tie day, five-a-side football tournament, nail painting, a raffle and an Xbox challenge.

Hayley Richardson, of the Bobbing-based hospice, started charity week by talking to pupils about the work Demelza does in the community. She later returned to receive the cheque from pupils after their fundraising success.

MP Derek's Commons touch

■ BY NICK AMES

DEREK Wyatt MP has offered a school the raffle prize of two tickets to a parliamentary debate to help raise funds for pupils in Africa.

The winners will get seats in the public gallery for Prime Minister's Questions, held every Wednesday in the House of Commons.

They will then join the Labour MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey for a buffet lunch at Portcullis House.

It follows a visit to The Oaks Infant School in Sittingbourne, where Mr Wyatt heard about fundraising efforts on behalf of their exchange school in Uganda.

The Oaks has been developing links with Rukungiri Primary Modern School for two years. The charity Mission Direct raises money for Rukungiri to enable them to extend and improve their school, so more children can receive an education and live on the premises, avoiding long journeys on foot each day. They are working to provide new dormitories.

The Oaks is supporting the fundraising project and deputy head Miriam Lynch will be visiting Rukungiri in July with Mission Direct volunteers to help with the building work, buying supplies and teaching.

When he visited The Oaks, Mr Wyatt heard how the two schools had exchanged letters, which helped raise awareness of children in

other parts of the world. To support their efforts, he has offered the PM's Questions experience and lunch for raffle.

Tickets are £1 each and the winner will be drawn at random. Mr Wyatt said: "I think it's great that The Oaks is building a friendship with the Ugandan school."

"This is clearly helping pupils to understand that life can be very different for children in other parts of the world. You are never too young to develop an appreciation of other countries and cultures, and I want to support them in nurturing this link."

"That's why I donated these tickets and I look forward to welcoming whoever wins them to the House of Commons."

Ms Lynch said: "We have learned a great deal already from Rukungiri and we hope this exchange will continue to grow."

"I am looking forward to getting out there and meeting the people and helping them get on with building the dormitory, which is desperately needed."

For raffle tickets, contact The Oaks on 01795 423619. The raffle will be drawn at 9am on Monday, June 15. The winner must live in the Sittingbourne and Sheppey constituency.



LET'S DO LUNCH: MP Derek Wyatt will invite the raffle winners to the House of Commons in Westminster

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Each week we get a mystery writer to air their views on living in Swale...

We all complain about the weather but no-one does anything about it

"ANYONE else, any other profession, if they were as incompetent, they'd be fired."

A frequent tirade, and applied almost invariably to those who forecast our weather.

I heard it just last week from a warden at a nature reserve, a man more familiar than most with the climate of these islands.

"They've forecast rain for every day this week and what did we get? Half an hour last night. The forecasts aren't worth bothering with. They should just give us the charts and let us make up our own minds," he said.

But of course 'they' don't. 'They' (the BBC, in this instance) have for the most part taken them away. We are, it appears, too stupid to be granted access to something as bewildering as a meteorological chart.

In truth, weather maps are no great puzzle, but in Dumb Britain it's best we're kept away from anything remotely challenging. In a way there's a logic to it. If the BBC's own forecast-

ers can't interpret a weather map, why should the layman? But it's a policy that is strangely flawed.

At the end of the forecast, those of us geeky enough to want more details are urged to visit the website. And here something odd has happened.

The website has had a makeover. But, in contrast to the TV, there hasn't been a dumbing down. Rather, the website has been rendered practically unusable.

It's near-impossible to find anything you want, links work on some computers but not others, while a bid to navigate the site is likely to leave you stranded in cyberspace.

Exasperated, you wind up back at the telly, where, if nothing else, the lovely Nazaneen Ghaffar makes the whole charade bearable.

Sadly, however, even she seems to have been got at behind the scenes. After a promising start her style has changed, presumably under orders.

You can imagine the pep talk: "Now,

Nazaneen, never forget you're talking to morons. All they want to know is whether it's a day in the garden or on the sunbed. Leap about like a jester. Put on an inane grin if the sun's coming out and pout if it's not."

But this is serious stuff. How many lives have been lost as a result of poor weather forecasting? Michael Fish, in a BBC news item in which he denies any role in the infamous 1987 hurricane-strength storm and lumps the blame on Bill Giles, finds a silver lining to that particular cloud.

"Craftily, I am trying to promote a book on the subject [extreme weather]..." he tells us.

What spiffing fun. Yet 18 people died in that storm. How many might still be with us if they'd been given the right facts? Perhaps we shouldn't ask. After all, what do we know?

EDITOR'S NOTE: All blogs are supplied with full name and address of the authors. They do not reflect the view of the newspaper but are designed to give our readers the chance to air their views.

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If there is a story in your area you think we should be covering contact the acting editor, **Jon Coates**, on 01303 817048 or email him on the details above. If you want to be the next Swale blogger then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of around 550 words) and email it to the editor. And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town log-on to www.yoursware.co.uk.

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WIN adventures on your computer with Wallace and Gromit



"BRILLIANT, lad!" Wallace and Gromit, beloved stars of Aardman Animations' award-winning films, are now appearing in a new series of stories you can play developed by interactive entertainment pioneers Telltale Games.

Entertainment pioneers Telltale Games have developed four all-new Wallace and Gromit stories released as monthly downloads for your Xbox 360 or PC.

The Wallace and Gromit Grand Adventures interactive game shows the two characters coming up with new business ventures and contraptions which fans can be a part of via their computer.

The game features imaginative storylines, humorous scripts and allows you to control the characters in each episode and be a part of the creative

world of West Wallaby Street.

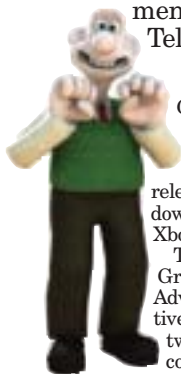
We are offering 12 lucky winners a chance to win an entire series of the Wallace and Gromit Grand Adventures on the PC (priced at £25 each season) which each include four exciting episodes, once the winners have been picked we will send Gift Codes by email so winners can download the game.

To enter, simply answer the question below and send your entry on a postcard along with your e-mail address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Wallace & Gromit Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, TN25 6SR. Closing date is May 31, 2009.

Question: Who are the Entertainment Pioneers behind the new Wallace and Gromit adventure games?

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TALK TIME DAVE PETERS

The entertainer speaks about starting his showbiz career with a mobile disco

So what do you do?

I'm a singer who does pensioners' parties, gigs at working men's clubs, weddings, birthday parties and anniversaries. I'd class myself as an entertainer – I just love being up in front of people.

Music from the past is my thing. I do a lot of Elvis, Neil Diamond and Engelbert Humperdinck covers. I'm not so interested in the modern stuff. I figured it was a great line of work to go into as people are always going to have parties and I love music, so it was a natural choice.

I've also just got through to the semi finals of a national talent contest with my Elvis impersonation, so things are going well at the moment.

How did you start out?

I used to be a DJ with my own mobile disco and it sprung from

a gig I did at the Camber Sands holiday park in 1988. I've now been doing it more than 20 years. I wouldn't do anything else.

Any bad points to the job?

The Isle of Sheppey is full of holiday parks, yet they don't book local talent for their entertainment evenings. A lot of them bring in entertainment from off the isle, so us Sheppey entertainers have to look elsewhere for our work. I think they could do more to help us out to be honest.

• Dave will appear in the UK Unsigned competition semi-finals in Dartford in June. He can be booked by calling 01795 870771.



YOUR LETTERS

Staff should be sacked for dodging our enquiries

I am outraged that Swale council has been allowing its staff to avoid answering telephone calls from the public.

Who do they think they are? They are there to serve us and look after our interests. If they don't they should be sacked.

If a councillor fails to represent their ward then the community can vote them out of office, but we can't do this to council staff.

So their managers should be keeping a closer grip on them to make sure they are professional, dedicated and courteous at all times, that is what they are there for.

There are few things more frustrating in life than being put on hold or diverted to someone's voicemail when you need to get something done.

I hope, now that your story has shed light on what has been going on behind the scenes at the council, that this will never happen again.

Robert White,
from Faversham, by email.

Scrap Dartford tolls and let people breathe easy



A Department of Transport spokesman said that without the toll traffic levels would be even higher, leading to more congestion and seriously worsening pollution. What a load of rubbish. By getting rid of the toll charge traffic would flow quicker, reducing congestion and pollution.

If another crossing is built it will also be a toll crossing, causing more congestion and pollution in another area. It is time the Government honoured the agreement and scrapped the unfair toll charge.

Peter Nassan,
by letter

Our MPs have made a string of bad decisions

I have read with increasing anger and disgust about the ludicrous expenses claimed by MPs.

These are the same men and women who sent young people from this country off to war without proper equipment.

They are the same group who are doing all they can to obstruct the Gurkhas who wish to settle here.

Is there no limit to their shame?

Ted Lawrence,
from Oare, by email.



Leaving us on hold and diverting calls is not on

I commend you for reporting on how lazy council workers have been diverting calls from the public to voicemail because they can't be bothered to answer them.

Your expose in last week's paper highlighted something I had long suspected.

I have often called the council's housing or benefits department and wondered why I can't speak to someone.

I always seemed to be put on hold for several minutes, until I got bored and gave up, or was diverted to a voicemail. With this kind of treatment they can't really be surprised when people don't trust their council.

I, for one, never bothered to leave messages on the voicemail, as what's the point?

This is no way for a council to treat their residents and I hope action is taken to stop staff shirking their responsibilities.

I can't imagine a company in the private sector ever allowing their employees to get away with such unprofessional behaviour. Can you?

Susan Clark,
by email.

Stop choking our health with tunnel congestion

It seems strange that in London there is a charge to stop congestion and pollution but a few miles down the road, at the Dartford tunnel, there is a charge that causes congestion and pollution.

Parents can now read up on dyslexia for free

To raise awareness of the strengths and talents of dyslexic children May 18-22 has been designated Xtraordinary Week.

To coincide with this I have written a free fact sheet on dyslexia which provides information about the condition.

Children who have dyslexia can have problems with reading, writing or spelling. It is believed that one in ten children have some form of dyslexia, but many parents are in the dark about their child's special educational needs and how best to help them.

If your readers would like a free copy of the fact sheet they should see www.appleford.wilts.sch.uk or contact me.

Dr Peter Gardiner
Educational Psychologist
Appleford School, Shrewton, Nr Salisbury, Wiltshire,
SP3 4HL. Telephone: 01980 621020
secretary@appleford.wilts.sch.uk

Pleased our cricketers are finally coming good

At the beginning of the season I was full of hope for Kent cricket – then it all fell away after some stumbling performances.

And I admit I was sceptical about Rob Key's statement that things will get better as they did last year.

But I have to take my hat off to him.

I watched some of the Glamorgan game and the Middlesex one-dayer and in both

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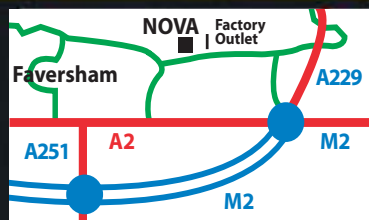
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We will include the best on these pages too - ensuring your comments reach the widest possible audience. In addition, if you find your newsagent, supermarket or petrol station runs out of Yourswale before you've picked up your copy, you never need to miss out.

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the players performed brilliantly.

Martin van Jaarsveld's batting in the championship was outstanding and yet again showed the crowd his application and dedication to the cause.

Well done to them all.

Julie Burton,
from Faversham, by email.

Let a new challenge unfold in your life

I am writing to encourage your readers to make September the month they decide to do something different - by taking part in Europe's first charity Folding Bike Challenge from London to Paris.

With 43 per cent of people in Kent believing they are not adventurous enough, the Folding Bike challenge is the perfect opportunity to try something different.

Providing an alternative take on London to Paris cycle rides, the challenge is supporting the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and Scope.

Organised by events company Action Challenge, the challenge will see participants in the saddle for a gruelling 240 miles. Setting off from the capital's London Eye on September 9 and reaching the Eiffel Tower in Paris four days later.

For details call 0207 3541450 or visit www.foldingbikechallenge.com.

Thank you in advance.

Kate Mitchell (BHF) and Jason Suckley
(Scope), by email.

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Stand up for top comedy

Headliner Michael McIntyre's show is a sell-out, but there's still plenty to see at comedy festival

STAND UP!

Friday, May 22 to Monday, May 25
Quarterhouse, Folkestone

GIGGLE your way through the bank holiday with the first Stand Up! Folkestone Comedy Festival.

The headline act of this inaugural comic celebration is Michael McIntyre, a phenomenally popular comedian whose show sold out within hours of tickets going on sale.

The son of a scriptwriter for Kenny Everett, he evidently has funny bones and his rise to fame over the last few years has been stellar. His next tour includes dates at Wembley Arena, so securing this intimate gig at Quarterhouse is a real achievement for the Creative Foundation.

Although McIntyre's show has sold out, there is plenty more going on over the long weekend.

On Saturday, Tony Allen, the 'Godfather of alternative comedy', will be running a stand-up workshop for aspiring comics. There is a preparatory exercise which needs to be completed before the event.

BBC Radio 1's resident magician Chris Cox exerts his unique brand of magic and psychology on Saturday at 6pm, demonstrating the skills that earned him five-star reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and his debut West End show.

Watch the jaw-dropping antics of a mind reader who says he can't read minds in this hilarious and hugely entertaining show.

See six great comedians for just £10/£8 with Lonestar Comedy Club's Stand and Deliver at 8pm on Saturday. Fergus Craig, Gerry Howell, Danielle Ward, Anil Desai, Terry Saunders and Jim Smallman will keep the laughs coming at a recession-beating price.

Sunday sees a great line-up of free events and workshops for kids by improvisation troupe The Noise Next Door, Little Bulb Theatre, Usifu Jalloh and Emmanuel the Magnificent. At 4pm Ray Peacock will host the comedy trivia quiz, to



FESTIVAL LINE-UP: The Noise Next Door, the Scottish Falsetto Sock Puppet Theatre and comedian Michael McIntyre are booked

see who can take the crown.

The Variety Four-Pack at 8pm offers a great line-up of Rob Deering, Pete Firman and the Scottish Falsetto Sock Puppet Theatre, with Ray Peacock acting as compere.

Deering's award-winning music-based comedy has earned appearances on BBC3's Annually Retentive, BBC2's Never Mind The Full Stops and regular guest spots on Channel 4's Big Brother's Big Mouth.

Firman has become one of the country's leading conjurors since his appearances on Channel 4's late night magic show Dirty Tricks, while hecklers are warned to beware of the razor-sharp and often confrontational Peacock.

The Scottish Falsetto Sock Puppet Theatre presents an extraordinary show featuring songs, sketches, socks, violence and Shakespeare. They will also be performing a family-friendly show at 2pm on Sunday.

Bank Holiday Monday offers comedy for kids with James Campbell, the world's only stand-up for children, starting at 11.30am. The festival draws to a close with the return of The Noise Next Door at 3pm. To book tickets call 01303 858500 or visit www.standupfolkestone.com.



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GENER8 FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 23
to Saturday, May 30
Gulbenkian Festival, Canterbury

A VIBRANT programme of theatre and events can be enjoyed by children during this year's Gener8 Festival.

Youngsters aged from one to 11 can take part in workshops, enjoy the thrill of live theatre and see some of the best contemporary filmmaking for children and families in this eight-day extravaganza. Tutti Frutti follow the success of last year's Silly Billy by opening the festival with *If Only The Lonely Were Home*, a beautiful story about loss, loneliness and love.

Clown Danny Schlesinger combines circus and comedy to magical effect in Circo Ridicoloso's *Lighter Than Air*, a joyous experience that offers lots of audience partic-



ipation. There will also be a balloon modelling workshop offered by Circo Ridicoloso, suitable for children aged four and above.

Other highlights include a fun writing workshop with Louise Arnold, author of *The Invisible Friend*, and a car-

toon workshop with Tim Quinn, a Guardian writer who is also a former editor of *Marvel Comics*.

There is much more to enjoy, so for full listings and prices visit www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk or call 01227 769075.

FORMS OF SILENCE

Wednesday, May 20 to Thursday,
June 4
Canterbury Cathedral

THE mysteries of life are explored in the work of Canterbury-born sculptor Edward Robinson.

Forms of Silence is an exhibition featuring more than 50 wood and bronze sculptures, exhibited in the vast space of the Chapter House. A recurring theme is the way that truth is not always easy to see at first, so Robinson often uses the triptych style. By concealing the inner surface with two hinged doors, the artist prompts viewers to think about the relationship between the outer design and the one they find within.

Materials vary from balks of timber including driftwood to cherry, ash and other fine-grained timbers for delicate parts, while some are cast in bronze.



Now living in Devon, Robinson grew up within the precincts of the cathedral, where both his father and grandfather were Canons. His career includes teaching in England and Africa, published books on the study of spirituality and the arts and

been Director of the Religious Experience Research Unit at Oxford University.

Robinson hopes to be on hand to talk about his work during much of the exhibition, which is open from 10am to 4pm daily.

FARMING WORLD

Monday, May 25 to
Friday, May 29
Farming World, Boughton

FROM creepy crawlies to birds of prey, there is a lot going on at Farming World this half-term.

Visitors will have the chance to witness the tricky business of removing woolly coats during Sheep Shearing and Wool Week. Next Thursday and Friday children can have a go at sewing and felt-making.

On Wednesday spiders, lizards and snakes will be paying a visit for an interactive Creepy Crawlies Day, when visitors can confront their fears by handling some of the little beasts. Children are invited to win a prize by earning stars in a variety of challenges as part of *I'm A Kid, Get Me Out of Here!* on



Thursday. Kids of all ages will enjoy working together to avoid the dreaded gunge.

There will be a rare chance to try falconry at Hawklands Birds of Prey Centre with the Have A Go day next

Friday. With all the resident attractions, there will be plenty to entertain all the family at Farming World.

For more information call 01227 751144 or visit www.farming-world.com.

SWALE LEISURE

Bank holiday fun at the fair in Faversham

ENJOY all the fun of the fair this bank holiday with the Faversham Gala Day on Monday.

There will be live music to be enjoyed at the town's recreation ground in Whitstable Road, along with an exciting fairground where families can celebrate the bank holiday with plenty of fun.

The fun starts at 1pm and will continue until 7pm.

It's rock 'n' roll at St Stephens Bar Club

STEP back in time and relive the glory days of rock 'n' roll with Ricky Fontayne's ultimate tribute show.

Fontayne sings the hits of the 50s and 60s made famous by Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran, Chuck Berry and Billy Fury. He will be performing at St Stephens Bar Club, Tenterden Drive, Canterbury, on Saturday. For more details call Lynn on 01227 464676.

Music and laughter is the best kind of variety

ENJOY two hours of comedy and music in the company of Arthur Smith this weekend.

The brilliant compere will be presenting his own material and also introducing a range of other acts in *Variety Lives!* at the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury on Saturday. The show starts at 7.45pm and costs £15. Book at www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk or call 01227 769075.

Can you help to jazz up Orange Street Festival?

SPONSORS are being sought to help support the hugely popular Orange Street Festival of Jazz.

More than 900 people attended the festival last year and organisers are seeking sponsorship to extend the festival into other venues across the city. For more information contact Adam Smith on 07861 371922 or 01227 760801 or email adam@orangestreetmusic.com.

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You'll be raving about the dance music at Hop Farm

BY SIMON ROBINSON

BELGIAN mixmasters 2ManyDJs have been given top billing on the Hop Farm Festival's dance stage line up.

The cut-and-paste duo – famed for fusing tracks from the likes of the Velvet Underground, Destiny's Child, Dolly Parton and Salt 'n' Pepa into one essential album – will bring the Paddock Wood two-dayer to a close on Sunday, July 5.

Legendary French DJ Etienne De Crecy will perform live on the previous night.

The likes of Paul Weller, Doves, The View, Ash and Editors are set to grace the main stage over the weekend but Hop Farm organisers said anyone able to prise themselves away from the big draws would be in for a treat.

They said: "Headlining on Saturday we have the amazing Etienne De Crecy live, bringing his full-on show in his amazing cube structure.

"It is one of the best shows, if not the best, by a DJ.

"Sunday's headliner we have one of the biggest names in dance music, 2ManyDJs.

"They are going to be one of the highlights of this year's festival, I guarantee it'll be one of the most talked about shows in dance music circles this year.

"Check out the line up for details on the rest of bill... it is one of the best dance line up's this year. If you like your dance music, you won't want to leave this tent."

The Hop Farm Festival stands alone in the overcrowded festival market – offering an event free from ticket registration, VIP areas,



branding and sponsorship.

This year the festival offers a weekend experience of boutique camping, top-notch food and traditional ales, with some of the best artists playing across three stages.

The Hop Farm Festival takes place at The Hop Farm, Paddock Wood, on Saturday, July 4 and Sunday, 5.

Weekend tickets cost £125 with day tickets priced at £65.

For more information on this year's event visit www.hopfarmfestival.com.

Saturday, July 4

- The Fratellis
- Pigeon Detectives
- The View
- Ash
- Echo and the Bunnymen
- Etienne De Crecy
- Florence and the Machine
- Noah and the Whale

Sunday, July 5

- Paul Weller
- Editors
- Doves
- 2ManyDJs
- Super Furry Animals
- The Twang
- Mystery Jets
- Ladyhawke



TOP BILLING: (Top) 2ManyDJs have been given top billing on the dance stage line-up; and (above) legendary French DJ Etienne De Crecy will perform

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Connor Mead (Matthew McConaughey) comes face to face with the ghost of his idol, Uncle Wayne (Michael Douglas), an aging lothario who instructs him he will be visited by three spirits.

IS ANYBODY THERE? (12A)



Edward, lives in the Lark Hall retirement home run by his parents. The boy's solitude is interrupted with the arrival of grieving widower Clarence, a retired magician who doesn't suffer children gladly.

HANNAH MONTANA - THE MOVIE (U)



Miley Cyrus searches for love in this rites of passage drama, interspersed with musical sequences. The movie promotes the family unit and the value of enduring friendship ahead of material wealth.

Star Trek's revival has a message for our times

BY KATE WHITING

MORE than four decades, six TV series and ten films since the crew of the Enterprise first pledged 'to boldly go where no man has been before', Captain Kirk and his pointy-eared sidekick Spock are back.

The original 1966 series wasn't an instant hit, but such is the impact of Star Trek on modern culture, that even the staunchest non-fan could pull a Vulcan salute and would know that if you need beaming up, Scotty's your man.

So how do you tackle a new film to bring the brand back up to warp speed and attract a new generation of fans, without offending Trekkies at the same time?

Find a young, hip cast worthy of wearing the iconic primary colour Lycra tops and bring back Leonard Nimoy to pass the Spock baton to Heroes' star Zachary Quinto, is how.

This was the mission Lost creator JJ Abrams' boldly embarked on. The self-professed non-fan also decided to take the franchise back to its roots, showing the 23rd century launch of the U.S.S. Enterprise and how its crew all came to be there.

Central to the film is the relationship between James T Kirk, made famous by William Shatner, and his one-day First Officer, who goes only by the name Spock.

From the moment they meet at the Starfleet Academy, there's no love lost, with Kirk – played by rising star Chris Pine – calling Spock a "pointy-eared b*****d".

Like other origins movies, including Batman Begins, JJ takes us back to his characters' childhoods to show us what shapes and motivates them.



BOLDLY GOING: Chris Pine stars as Captain Kirk

The film opens with Kirk's birth, as his father, captain of the doomed U.S.S. Kelvin is locked in battle with a rogue Romulan ship.

Flash forward to Kirk on Earth as a young man, in a bloody bar brawl with students of the Starfleet Academy after trying to chat up Uhura (Zoe Saldana).

He finally gets inspired to make something of his life by Captain Pike (Bruce Greenwood), who challenges him to fulfil his father's thwarted potential.

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Meanwhile, on the planet Vulcan, young Spock is being bullied by his classmates because he's half-human and half Vulcan.

At the Starfleet Academy, Spock despises Kirk's impulsiveness and Kirk is equally frustrated by the officious Spock.

Chris Pine, 28, explains: "Zach and I wanted the audience to see two very bright, very obstinate young men who are destined to butt heads throughout their lives, but will grow to love each other for that very reason."

Chris is sure the film, like the original series, will impress and endure.

"Right now in an economic crisis, to present a vision of people working together instead of division, I just think it's a positive, wonderful message."

STAR TREK
Certificate 12A

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MONEY MATTERS

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- Why the recession isn't getting us down
- Don't let debt get the better of you
- Is working from home a cheaper option?
- Get an index-linked return on savings
- EU speaks out for small business
- Reasons behind company paid assistance
- Only one way for mortgage rates to go
- Three points of survival
- Communication is key in a downturn
- What to do if you need to close down
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Good advice for difficult times

THE experts can't seem to agree – one day we are told the green shoots of recovery are peeping through, the next they are nowhere to be seen.

Whatever the truth, it's certainly going to be a while before we

are all sleeping easy in our beds again and there are still plenty of choppy waters to deal with.

That's why this latest edition of Money Matters has plenty of good advice for consumers and businesses who are all looking to reduce their costs, save money and do some serious planning for the future.

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Follow Dad's Army to defeat the recession

By **TONY PATEY**

DON'T panic, Mr Mainwaring – one in every three South East small business bosses are evoking the Blitz-type attitude and keeping their chins up as the economic bombs rain down during the recession.

They're refusing to let the recession get them down, insisting it has had no impact on their personal lives, according to new research from independent financier Bibby Financial Services.

However, that does mean that two out of every three seem to have the opposite view ...

Anyway, many business owners in the South East are adopting various ways of coping:

- 47 per cent are refusing to cut out what could be seen as luxuries, such as Blackberries or company cars, which they clearly see as essential
- 69 per cent are continuing with holiday



- plans or other time off
 - 76 per cent are not getting any less sleep
 - 71 per cent are not seeing any less of their family
 - 82 per cent are maintaining a healthy lifestyle
 - just 12 per cent are drinking more alcohol.
- Andy Leopold, Bibby's spokesperson for the



MILITARY STYLE: Businesspeople are taking Corporal Jones' advice and refusing to panic, in fact many of them are hanging onto their 'luxuries' like Blackberries and company cars

South East said: "Some might consider a Blackberry or company car a luxury, but for many small business owners in the South East today these are simply essentials which are helping with the day-to-day running of their business.

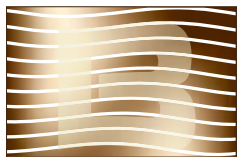
"Whereas previously business owners in the region may have been prepared to neglect their personal lives in order to sustain their business, these days they recognise the importance of trying to maintain some sort of work life balance, instead seeing time away from the business, such as holiday, as a tool to help them survive.

"However, while it's good to see business owners in the South East remaining positive, they also need to be prudent financially to get

through the downturn and not completely throw caution to the wind.

"With 77 per cent of business owners in the region now scrutinising finances more carefully, it's clear cash flow remains king. Luckily there are still plenty of ways for the region's business owners to stay on top of cash-flow issues and ensure those close to them don't suffer in the process."

Indeed, all but 11 per cent of business owners in the South East polled say they have learned something new from the experience of this recession. Thirty three per cent have learned to keep a closer eye on cash flow, 26 per cent have learned to plan better for the future and 14 per cent say they have become more shrewd.



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Don't let debt recovery drag your business down

By **DAVID GREEN**

EVEN for companies currently managing to weather the economic storm there are still many challenges to face.

Not least is the fact that overdue bills or worse still, customer debts, are spiralling out of control.

Ultimately, debt recovery is becoming one huge headache and more businesses than ever are having to spend their time chasing debt.

Overdue bills can be a nightmare to manage, and if you're a smaller business whose survival is dependant on regular cash flow, the urgency of the situation is magnified.

A good cash flow is critical for companies to be able to pay their staff and suppliers; not to mention if they are to have any hope at all of generating income for the owners and shareholders of the business.

Taking the right steps from the outset will allow you to maximise getting the money rightly owed to you without damaging your business relationships.

The first step is to ensure your terms and conditions are clear regarding payment, and if you are going to use an external company to collect overdue payments, make your inten-



CHALLENGES: Take the right steps to maximise the chances of getting money owed to you

tions clear to your customer so there can be no misunderstandings.

A solution needs to be put into action swiftly to give you every chance of getting your money back at the lowest cost to you.

Many businesses find it hard to chase a customer for the debts, particularly where the customer is another business, as there is a risk that attempts to recover debts will be seen as aggressive and relationships can sour.

Many companies lack confidence in making heavier demands for payment. Fears of losing future business coupled with emotional bag-

gage can all too often interfere with this process.

But it is important not to lose sight of the fact the customer has failed to pay you the money they owe and you simply can't afford to jeopardise the financial stability of your own business or allow them to spiral into further debt.

These concerns can be avoided by a simple and effective recovery plan.

As the payment terms near their end, a 'friendly' phone call can, if necessary, be followed up in writing to instigate a gentle reminder of the outstanding payment due

and to re-emphasise your payment terms.

What has to be avoided is continual phone calls and letters chasing a debt as this wastes your time and stops you from concentrating on new business.

Enlisting the help of a recovery agent or a professional solicitor at the early stages could be beneficial in terms of saving you time and money in the long term, and it takes away the hassle and emotional concerns which often materialise.

However, debt collection agencies will usually charge a percentage of the total debt, which means they are likely to cherry-pick those larger debts and cases that will bring them a good guaranteed return, and this can be a costly option.

In our view, the most efficient debt recovery model is to use a combination of all the various options, but don't be afraid to allow those representing you to take the action that is necessary to recover the debt.

Knowing the right path to choose with a debt and what action to take if, and when, a judgement is obtained is extremely important as many cases get to judgement and then are unable to be enforced.

Debt recovery is not an exact science, but experience is all important.

• **David Green is spokesman for MTA Solicitors, which has an office in Bromley.**

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**MONEY
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Home is where the office is



By **JOHN GUTHRIE** and **DOUG SKILTON**

WITH the dole queue getting longer and recession-battling bosses seeking ways to cut costs, increasing numbers of people are starting to work from home.

As many as one in seven of the working population are now homeworkers.

The attractions of remote working are clear: the potential release from rental overheads and the freeing up of commuting time.

But there are practical and legal issues which must be balanced against the saving from office overheads before setting aside part of the home for business use.

We'd like to consider those who work totally from home as opposed to the occasional home worker. In many cases internal alterations will be carried out to the home to facilitate that remote working.

Planning permission is required when-

ever there is a material change in the planning use of a property. It is a matter of fact and degree in each case whether there has been such a change.

The key question for people intending to run a business from home is whether the overall character of the house will change from being a private home as a result of the business.

The most important factor to consider is the question of whether the business use is subservient to the residential use. The right to use land for a primary planning use includes the right to use it for a subservient or 'ancillary' use.

However, there is no hard-and-fast rule for deciding the point at which running a business from home will fall outside the scope of ancillary use.

Much will turn on the nature of the business use, but judicial guidance suggests that anyone using more than 10 per cent of their home for business use could be at risk of requiring separate planning permission.

Planning permission may also be required for any physical alterations that are needed to make the property suitable for the business use.

Compliance with building regulations will also be needed if there are

any changes to the home. As an example, a hairdresser who decides to run their business from home should remember that not only do structural changes in the property require Building Regulation Consent but also simpler measures such as the installation of a washbasin.

Business rates, as opposed to council tax, will apply to the part of the home used exclusively for business.

Remote workers should consider getting a separate phone line for their business to claim tax relief on business calls and also about reclaiming VAT on anything bought for business purposes.

A remote worker should always check both their deeds and mortgage conditions, or their rental agreement, to ensure that there are no restrictions against running a business from home.

If necessary they should apply for consent under the deeds and mortgage.

Rubbish (often overlooked) is another problem area and business waste should not be put in domestic refuse bins. Plastic business waste bags can be expensive.

From a practical viewpoint, will customers of the business visit the home and upset the neighbours? If it is necessary to have client meetings should they be at the client's premises instead?

Finally, remember to check that using your home for business will not invalidate your buildings insurance policy.

• *John Guthrie is an associate and Doug Skilton is a solicitor at Tunbridge Wells based Thomson Snell & Passmore.*

HOME OFFICE: There are practical and legal issues to working from home



Essential guide to where you can save

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Guaranteeing a return for your savings

By **JEREMY GATES**

IF YOU believe our economy sits on a powder keg of inflation – and some fear its return might be the only salvation for Britain if Government plans to borrow £700 billion are carried through – there are sound arguments for savings which guarantee an index-linked return.

If they ponder Chancellor Alistair Darling's words carefully, savers might want an alternative to banks or building societies for part of their savings. In any case, the three per cent-plus fixed-rate returns, now on offer from these institutions over two or three years, could look mean if inflation takes off.

It was therefore not coincidental that National Savings & Investments (NS&I) offered two new issues of Inflation Beating Savings certificates last week. Also called Index-linked

certificates, they enable savers to invest a maximum £15,000 per issue in three-year (19th issue) or five-year (46th issue) certificates.

Dax Harkins, NS&I senior savings strategist says they usually make a new issue of Index-linked certificates when they change the rate: "In this instance, the rate stays the same – Retail Prices Index (RPI) plus one per cent – if held for the full term, but investors wanted a new issue to allow them to put more money in."

Opportunity

As NS&I certificates are tax free, the equivalent rate is index-linking plus 1.25 per cent for basic rate taxpayers, and index-linking plus 1.67 per cent for higher rate taxpayers. On each anniversary, interest and index-linking are added to the certificate.

The last issue was in June, 2008, which effectively means NS&I offers an opportunity to salt away up to £15,000 per person per year, or £30,000 per couple, with returns free of income tax and capital gains tax (CGT), like ISAs.

Many savers value 100 per cent security for their cash. Index-linked Savings Certificates



Picture: PETER BYRN/PA PHOTOS

SET: Putting your cash in National Savings & Investments certificates could be the answer

were launched by NS&I in 1975, and 600,000 investors hold £16bn in them against £39bn in Premium Bonds, which get more promotion.

With Premium Bond prizes falling to just one per cent, new £25 prizes have been introduced to ensure Bond holders win nearly one million prizes per month. With 39 billion Premium Bonds in circulation, the odds on any single bond winning are 36,000-1.

As Premium Bonds lose some appeal, the threat of inflation makes Index-linked certificates more attractive. If RPI goes negative they still guarantee the annual one per cent bonus on investments held to the end of their term. In fact, this is the first time a continuous period of deflation has been experienced since NS&I launched index-linked certificates.

With personal tax levels certain to rise after the next General Election, there is a strong case for using NS&I products to hold more savings outside the tax net. However, savers should remember Inflation Beating Savings pay no interest at all on withdrawals after one year, with returns thereafter weighted to favour those who remain for the full term.

"It won't have you jumping up and down with excitement, but this product already pays a better return than many instant access savings accounts, and returns could look good if inflation kicks in, maybe 18 months from now," Mark Dampier at Hargreaves Lansdown said.

Clearer

Kevin Mountford, Moneysupermarket.com, says NS&I products should be in any balanced savings portfolio: "With index-linking, you have the prospect of a fixed return, as opposed to accounts which are market-leading one moment and stragglers a few months later."

"Here there is the prospect of a definite return, over and above the cost of living."

Andrew Hagger, Moneynet.co.uk, says for savers purely concerned with inflation, it's a good home for your money. But he is not sure he would tie up money for that long at present: "Consider the West Bromwich BS E-Bond, paying 4.3 per cent before tax on a one-year bond (min £5,000), or perhaps ICICI Bank's Instant Access paying 2.45 per cent on a minimum £1, until the trend on rates becomes clearer."

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EU acts to help small companies

By **GÜNTER VERHEUGEN**

European Commission Vice President, responsible for enterprise and industry policy

IN THIS present economic crisis everybody speaks about job losses in the big industries and big companies.

Governments are keen to take action and to find ways to support them. But there is also another side of the coin: who cares about the millions of small enterprises which are struggling for survival? I do.

Because I know, without entrepreneurs there are no enterprises, without enterprises there are no jobs. And, therefore, I am convinced that in the crisis we must strengthen our efforts to give small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) the best possible framework-conditions.

Not being paid for the goods and services delivered is bad for a business in any circumstances, but becomes dramatic today as the economic crisis reduces alternative sources of finance and diminishes demand. The distance to bankruptcy can get dangerously short.

As government at all levels puts imagination to work looking for any useful measure to counter the crisis, they should not forget about the simplest – avoid the huge amount of invoices for the purchase of goods and services which they pay late after delivery.

That is why the Commission has decided it was time to upgrade EU rules on late payment in commercial transactions and proposed public authorities should as a rule pay their bills within a maximum of 30 days.

As an incentive to clear the bills in time the



SMALL THINGS: Günter Verheugen sees the value of entrepreneurs and small enterprises

Commission suggests introducing a flat-rate compensation of five per cent cumulated with the late payment interest. In parallel, the European Commission commits itself to speed

up its own payment for the purchase of goods and services.

The proposal on late payments is only the latest in a series of initiatives to help SMEs taken by this European Commission since it took office in 2004 and which culminated with the proposal of the Small Business Act (SBA) in June of last year. This has found the agreement of all member States and the European Parliament.

The SBA puts forward a complete policy framework to improve the overall approach to entrepreneurship and to promote SMEs' growth by helping them tackle the remaining problems which hamper their development.

The act applies to all companies which have fewer than 250 employees: 23 million across the EU.

Key to this new policy framework is the application of the Think Small First principle. Henceforth, all public authorities in the EU are called to ensure that SMEs' interests are always taken into account in policy making.

The Commission has revised state aid rules to encourage Member States to do more for SMEs since public funding for training, research and development, environmental protection and other types of aid is important for SMEs.

We have proposed a new statute for a European Private Company which will allow SMEs to start up and operate according to the same company law provisions throughout the European Union.

Finally, I am happy to add that the Member States agreed to open up the option to apply reduced Value Added Tax rates for locally supplied services, including labour intensive services, such as hairdressing, catering, and repair.

To encourage and inspire new entrepreneurs

who are planning to set up a new business, we have also launched an Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs – a European exchange programme to help entrepreneurs acquire relevant skills for managing an SME by spending time working in another EU country with an experienced entrepreneur.

To free the hands of SMEs, we are cutting administrative burdens with full speed, eyeing the target to reduce administrative burdens on companies stemming from EU legislation by 25 per cent by 2012.

For example, in January the Commission adopted a proposal for a revision of the VAT Directive to remove the barriers to electronic invoicing. The yearly reduction potential could be as high as 18 billion euros in the mid-term.

Extra savings

In the case of company law, the Commission proposed to allow Member States to exclude micro-enterprises, with ten employees or less, from the scope of EU accounting directives, which could bring additional savings of seven billion Euros.

Moreover 24 Member States have given themselves a better regulation agenda.

Since access to finance is essential for SMEs, notably in times of crisis, the European Investment Bank devoted 30 billion euros to SMEs in Europe in the form of new loans granted via commercial banks. This scheme, approved at the end of 2008, is actively supported by the European Commission.

Now is the time, once and for all, to cement the needs of SMEs in EU policy. To get out of the current crisis we need to clear the path for those who want to create more jobs and are the key drivers of innovation, who will need to master the ship towards a low carbon economy.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Firms are helping you out to help themselves

By **TONY PATEY**

THE truth always comes out – and when firms dip into their pockets to help staff being booted out the door through no fault of their own it's not because the companies are being nice and kind.

The real reasons, according to one of our biggest recruitment consultancies, are to maintain a good reputation, hold onto key employees – and help managers to deliver the bad news.

It's euphemistically called outplacement, but it basically means easing unwanted or unneeded executives out of a company by pro-

viding company-paid assistance in finding them new jobs.

With short-term strategy firms cutting back on staff – as they always do come an economic downturn – more individuals are getting this type of support.

Now a study by Reed Consulting has revealed that aside from what it says is the moral obligation, there are many reasons why firms cough up to offer help.

A company spokesman: "In the event of a firm having to make redundancies, there is always the risk its reputation among potential employees and customers will be damaged.

"Three quarters of firms felt provision of outplacement could improve the organisation's reputation, while a half believed it could help make them be seen as an employer of choice."

Also, perversely, firms think it helps them

retain staff. "Given its common proximity to redundancy programmes, respondents felt the provision of outplacement support helped the employer retain and motivate those staff not directly affected.

"It is a commonly held view that up to 25 per cent of top performers leave an organisation within 90 days of a major change announcement being made. Two-thirds of respondents agreed that offering outplacement support for staff being made redundant helped retain those who remained."

The study also found that more than 70 per cent of employers believe offering outplacement helps line managers implement redundancies "with a clearer conscience" and 87 per cent of those interviewed felt it eased the pressure on them.

Now we know.

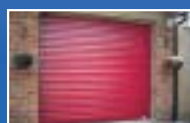


REPUTATION: Employers help staff move on because they feel it encourages others to stay with them

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Are mortgage rates about to start going up?

EIGHT weeks after the base rate hit a mind-boggling 0.5 per cent, last week's decision by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to leave rates unchanged hardens the consensus that mortgage rates go one way from here – up.

On the way down, tracker loans were a smart move for borrowers, shrinking monthly repayments close to zero in some cases.

As a new order takes shape, fixed-rate loans look a good defensive move for borrowers who fear rates, when they rise again, could stay high for some time.

Among lenders, there's a spring 'nip' in the air, a sense the worst is behind us.

Gloom began to lift in mid-April when our biggest lender, Halifax, offered to pay up to £1,000 of a homebuyer's council tax for a year to any borrower taking a mortgage with a deposit of at least 10 per cent.

Are lenders actually keen to find new customers with house prices still falling, possibly by eight to 10 per cent for the rest of 2009? Plainly they are, because rivals have followed Halifax's lead.

Woolwich, the lending arm of Barclays, has slashed rates on two, three, four and five-year fixes, starting at 3.69 per cent for two years (to maximum loan to value (LTV) of 70 per cent).

For remortgagers (max LTV 75 per cent), Abbey reckons its three-year fix at 4.09 per cent, seven-year at 4.99 per cent and 15-year at 5.38 per cent, are its lowest in a decade.

Abbey's Nici Auchlam-Gardiner says their research shows that for remortgagers, a third are looking for a tracker, and over half will choose a two-year tracker.

"With a best buy rate of Base Rate plus 2.45 per cent, borrowers should also seriously consider the two-year tracker."

Andrew Hagger at Moneynet.co.uk isn't so sure: "There is a feeling trackers won't look so good once rates move up again. New trackers around 2.5 per cent over base mean a rate of 5.5 per cent if base rate gets back to three per cent," he says.

And trackers often have Early Repayment Charges lurking in the small print, expensive when borrowers get another loan.

Fee-free deals are back in fashion too: Yorkshire Bank offers remortgages with no arrangement fees on fixed-rate, offset and current account loans.

But Hagger says fee free is not always cheapest: "On a £150,000 loan over 25 years (75 per cent LTV), for instance, an HSBC fix at 3.99 per cent with a £599 fee costs £1,570 less over three years than Alliance & Leicester's fee free loan at 4.69 per cent."

Perhaps the most encouraging sign mortgage markets are easing is HSBC's £1bn offered as 90 per cent LTV loans – a two-year

By JEREMY GATES

fix at 4.99 per cent (fee £1,499), a two-year fix at 5.49 per cent (fee £199) and a lifetime tracker at 4.09 per cent plus base rate (currently 4.59 per cent) with non-refundable fee of £999. To qualify, HSBC borrowers must open a current account, which charges a monthly fee – and with access to current account details, the bank could make further efforts to sell financial products.

HSBC, with its first direct subsidiary, could take 13 per cent of the 2009 mortgage market – against three per cent in 2007. It isn't saddled with unprofitable mortgages hitting rival lenders who grabbed market share before boom turned to bust.

Ray Boulger at brokers John Charcol says households should focus on two strategies at this stage. Firstly, money saved on low mortgage rates should go to pay outstanding debt on mortgages, credit cards, and other loans. Don't splurge on luxuries and holidays.

Secondly, rates will be higher than they are today, so borrowers should be in a position to absorb them with comfort: "The key question

is when rates rise. We could see a move in early-2010, or low rates could stay for two years. A big danger is that when the Bank of England injects its second £75bn into the economy – the first expires at the end of May – inflationary pressures could be unleashed, and rate rises would be needed to control them."

Whilst prices keep falling, borrowers who delay remortgaging could have problems finding a new loan in a year, if they need a higher LTV because of falling values.

Darren Cook at Moneyfacts.co.uk is equally fearful that lenders' big concern is to play safe: "Banks, far from predicting the end of the slump, are hedging bets by increasing the number of their best mortgages to those fortunate enough to have a 40 per cent deposit. The average mortgage rate for a 60 per cent LTV is 4.29 per cent, compared to 5.29 per cent six months ago, and availability within this tier has risen too."

Boulger says some borrowers might still take a tracker loan with a 'droplock' option enabling them to lock into a fix later. There is a case, for example, for taking an HSBC tracker and switching when HSBC offers fixes for longer than two years. But borrowers may have to pay more for a higher LTV limit.

"People keen to remortgage get a nasty shock from valuations at five to 10 per cent lower than they expected," says Boulger. "My advice, if you have equity of less than 30 per cent, is to fix straightaway and in most cases, to take a five-year fix, which will look cheap if rates stay high for two to three years."

"Borrowers on low LTVs (below 75 per cent) may have a case for not rushing into a fix. They should keep an eye on available deals, to fix in late-2009/early-2010."

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Make a confident investment in key areas of business

KENT'S business advisory service Business Link, says there are three areas to focus on if you want your firm to survive in the downturn.

The report The Rise of the Super SME Through the Recession by research company Opinion Matters highlighted the fact that businesses which are confident about their future had increased or maintained levels of investment in one of the three key areas; IT, marketing and training.

Investment does not necessarily mean a big cash outlay. It can be an investment of time, resources and knowledge focus – making the most of affordable options freely available through general purpose technology such as the internet.

Almost half of all successful businesses surveyed (47 per cent) had kept up investment in IT, indicating the IT infrastructure they had in place was helping to keep the workforce optimised for success.

For example, businesses with a mobile-enabled workforce were found to be 60 per cent more likely to forecast an increase in growth during the next 12 months – indicating the vital role flexible working practices



DEVELOPMENT: IT is one of three key areas worth focusing on for the future

and technologies play in successful business.

Among successful businesses, 43 per cent had actually increased investment in marketing, contributing to their success and long-term prospects.

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Rather than cutting training budgets over the past 12 months, successful businesses were more likely to have increased investment, with 39 per cent of these actually spending more on training in the last 12 months than ever before.

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Keep people in the know

By **TONY PATEY**

CLASSROOMS can be crucibles of delight – and angst – when it comes to doing ‘practicals’, especially in something like business studies, which most people wouldn’t think of as hands-on subject like chemistry.

But good teachers know memory is best primed when doing something rather than just being told



about it, and business studies is no exception. Take communication, one of the most important management tools.

I used to start my A-level communication module with Chinese whispers – sticking a student in each corner of the room and getting them to verbally pass round a short message I wrote down for the first person to memorise.

We all know the party game – the message ends up totally distorted at the end when the last student says what they had been told.

Once did it with Chinese students; it blew their minds, because in China they had to sit, listen and learn by rote. Actually physically doing something like this was alien, almost embarrassing, for them – but the lesson was still learnt.

When you’re running a business, word-of-mouth rumours can get out of hand and badly damage, even ruin, you. Send out the right message, in the right way, to internal and external stakeholders. And it’s even more important in an economic downturn.

As a reporter I’ve had emails about what was going to happen in newspaper groups at the other end of the country – and when the announcements came I found the info I had received was only vaguely right.

A rumour once swept round the world – in minutes – in the 80s that “Reagan was dead” – panic in all the markets, Wall Street and our stock exchange went berserk. But it was another Regan, different spelling, in the US administration – not dear old Ronnie.

It can be easy to hide, take a quick holiday perhaps, when there’s bad news to give out, even just to keep inside your office and hope the world’ll go away. But it doesn’t work.

“Do not hide,” is the advice of Paul A Argenti, professor of corporate communication at Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College. “Not hearing from you will breed additional suspicion and mistrust among stakeholders.”

Communicate often and early, he says, and talk to people directly – hearing information straight from the horse’s mouth gives reassurance and stops distortion – and people can question you directly, not second-hand. That alone can diffuse difficult situations.

Also, he says, get inside the media’s head. Try seeing how the press might spin your message.

A difficult one, that. A lot depends on the medium, and this is where some really specialised knowledge is called for, usually from someone in PR who has had a lot of experience as a journalist or broadcaster.

What they should tell you is that trying to put a gloss on something that doesn’t need it will soon be swept aside, and the information will be seen for what it is.

Very few people have succeeded in hoodwinking the media over bad news – the only time I’ve ever seen it done was when Harold Wilson was prime minister in the 70s.

Inflation was rocketing, shock horror. Mr Wilson, a very clever man, brought in the first index-linked savings certificates – they were called Granny Bonds because they were for retired people (but, of course, everyone gave money to their grannies to cash in on them).

The media gave the thumbs-up because people now had the chance to make some money. Until some maverick City reporter on a tabloid stood up at a press conference and asked: “Isn’t this giving people a vested interest in rising inflation, when we should be doing everything we can to bring it down?”

No guesses for who that was...



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

When it's time to move

By **TONY PATEY**

EVEN in the good times companies close or are taken over. So, if the worst does happen, what do you need to do?

Business Link has the following advice about the key points you will need to consider if you are thinking of selling or closing.

Who you need to tell

Your tax and any official records concerning your business will need to be up to date and complete when you sell your company.

You should also inform all your customers and suppliers so they have the chance to raise any outstanding payments, credits and liabilities, and you can account for them when you finalise your accounts and tax affairs.

You will need to follow the necessary statutory procedures and form filling to resolve any outstanding tax, VAT and National Insurance matters with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

If you are selling a company and there will be changes to its secretary or directors, you must inform Companies House.

If you employ more than 50 people you will also need to take account of the Information and Consultation of Employees (ICE) Regulations.

Employees

You have obligations to safeguard their rights, finalise their pay and deductions, and issue their P45 form. You may also be able to offer them help in coping with the challenges arising from losing their job.



STAFF: As an employer you are obliged to safeguard the rights of your workforce

Tax and VAT when closing

The position of an employee with regards to rights to redundancy pay, company pension payments, etc, will vary according to the circumstances of the business closure (eg, insolvency, voluntary liquidation), the business type (eg, partnership, limited company, sole trader) and the length of the employee's employment to date.

When you close your business, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) will need to assess how much your final tax bill should be. It is essential to let HMRC know of any possible tax liabilities you have as soon as they are known, even if you are currently unable to pay the tax

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PAPERWORK: Assets will need to be brought up to date for your final day of business

you owe. If business assets are sold and the proceeds go to the individual owners of the business, or if shares in the company are sold, the individuals concerned may have to pay Capital Gains Tax.

If you are VAT registered, you will need to inform HMRC. Once they are satisfied that your registration should be cancelled they will

confirm the date and issue a final VAT return, on which you account for VAT on stock and certain assets on hand at the close of business on the day your registration is cancelled.

Insolvency and bankruptcy

Bankruptcy applies to individuals, and is one route you can take if you are a sole trader

or partner in a partnership and have debts you cannot pay.

It frees you from your debts, but your assets are divided among your creditors and restrictions may be placed on your future business activities by a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order issued by a court if your conduct is considered to have been dishonest or blameworthy – this can last between two years and 15 years.

A company may be forced to close by being taken to court by its creditors, lenders, shareholders, or by the Government or legal authorities seeking to wind up the business.

Alternatively, the owners or directors of the business may decide not to continue operating the business and apply to have the business wound up.

The court may rule that the company is passed into the hands of the Official Receiver. The receiver runs the company in the best interests of creditors and shareholders until its liquidation – ie, the sale of the company's assets. Any money raised is used to pay off the company's debts.

Tax and VAT when selling

You will need to follow the necessary statutory procedures to resolve any outstanding tax, VAT and National Insurance matters with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

When you sell a business, you may have to pay Capital Gains Tax if you made a profit – referred to as a gain – from the sale of the assets. But, if you use the proceeds from the sale to buy another business, you might be able to defer the gain through business asset roll-over relief.

If your company is registered for VAT, contact HMRC and complete form VAT 7 to cancel your registration, or form VAT 68 to transfer your registration to the new owner.

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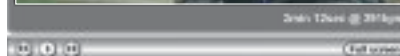
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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Divorce doesn't have to split up your business

NOT all problems faced by businesspeople are just in the boardroom and workshop.

If you own a business and you're going through a divorce you can take some comfort from a more realistic approach towards the valuation of your assets, says a Kent lawyer.

Susi Gillespie, a solicitor specialising in divorce at law firm Furley Page, says the change of heart follows a recent High Court judgment where a wife's claim following a 15-year marriage hinged on the estimated value of her husband's restaurant business.

The wife reckoned it was worth £5.3 million and the husband £1.7m. In summing up, the judge stressed that the valuation of a business was an art not a science and ultimately a matter of opinion. He also pointed out that the business in question had been operating successfully at the same site for more than 30 years, so it couldn't be defined as solely matrimonial property.

The judge refuted the wife's unsubstantiated claim that the family had received benefits in kind from the business which were equivalent to £80,000 a year.

Ms Gillespie said: "Detailed evidence from forensic accountants and an expensive dispute over the exact value of the business may be pointless if the business is the means by which the husband is going to earn his income and maintain the family in the future."

"The case also shows that where a business was started before a marriage, the husband



FALL OUT: Susi Gillespie, inset, says the courts are more realistic about business assets

will get some credit for the value it had already acquired so its total value won't be treated as part of the matrimonial pot. Just as important, this case highlights the need for allegations of fringe benefits from a business

to be properly demonstrated if they're going to be reflected in the value of a business."

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Road tax weapon is blunted but drivers can save money

By **STEVE LOADER**

GOVERNMENT efforts to use road tax to beat drivers into giving up so-called gas guzzlers have met with mixed success.

There can be no doubt that escalating tax or vehicle excise duty (VED) over the past couple of years has helped fuel downsizing, but there was outcry after the March, 2008, Budget at 'draconian' rates to be applied to larger cars, especially with the recession looming.

Consequently, Chancellor Alistair Darling backtracked last November and proposed amended charges from April 1, 2009, to soften the blow at the top end of the market, though the Government says VED will continue to be amended in future to maintain the downward force in vehicle sizes and emissions.

They will also continue to be based on CO2 emissions rather than fuel consumption and apply only to cars registered after March 1, 2001; inconsistent emissions data on older cars means these are taxed simply at £120/year if the engine is 1,549cc or less and then £185 if it is above – something of a bargain for the owners of large older 'gas guzzlers' if they are content to bear higher fuel bills, opt for a £1,500-2,000 LPG (liquid petroleum gas) conversion or cover relatively few miles.

The new rates are weighted even more in favour of the latest, cleanest and most miserly small cars. Models emitting 100g/km of CO2 or less, like the new Ford Fiesta ECONetic, for instance, qualify for Band A or zero rating.

The payable steps are: Bands B and C (101-120g/km) – £35; Bands D and E (121-140g/km) – £120; Band F (141-150g/km) – £125; Band G (151-160g/km) – £150; Bands H and I (161-180g/km) – £175; Bands J and K (181-225g/km) – £215; Band L (226-255g/km) – £405; Band M (255g/km plus) – £405.

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Avalone Flooring Ltd in Strood is offering 10 per cent off carpets

■ Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £25 off removal of skin tags, moles, verrucas, warts, red veins, cysts and skin peels

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■ Bones on Beds in Herne Bay is offering 10 per cent off mattresses

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■ Blakes Hair & Beauty in Canterbury is offering 50 per cent off first appointment (cut and style)

■ KOS is offering luxury Egyptian cotton 400-count percale bed linen. Save 40 per cent

■ Theatre Royal in Margate is offering two tickets for £20 New English Contemporary Ballet, June 12

■ KOS is offering a Karcher pressure washer kit £99.99 including free accessories save £116

■ Lexterten furniture store in Westgate-on-Sea is offering £300 off all dining suite orders over £2,000

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Essential guide to where you can save

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■ Avalone Flooring Ltd in Strood is offering 10 per cent off laminates

■ Lexterten furniture store in Westgate-on-Sea is offering £200 off for every £1000 spent on home office furniture

■ Village Hotel in Maidstone is offering half price draft beer or glass of wine with any burger from the new menu

■ Blakes Hair & Beauty in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off any Kersastase

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Fuel for thought

THERE are signs that diesel – the wonderfuel of the past – could run out of puff as the race to cut emissions and save money gets tougher.

Its original appeal was the cheapness of the fuel, greater mpg and the better low down pulling power of the engines and their ability to meet tighter emissions legislation.

However, diesel now commands an increasing premium against petrol and there are doubts whether the engines can continue to meet ever tougher emission laws.

Meanwhile, petrol has hit back with smaller, lighter and cleaner engines with turbocharging for flexibility, while there are other options emerging to save money and the planet.

Hybrid

These partner conventional engines with electric units, but two powerplants and power supplies – fuel tank plus batteries – mean extra weight, while production complexity raises prices so buyers must cover many miles to balance this. Motorway mpg is hardly better than a standard car. High toxicity of the batteries is also a worry at the end of the car's life.

LPG

Liquid petroleum gas seems an excellent alternative fuel due to lower duty and emissions and cheaper car tax. However, the



IN THE TANK: Diesel versions of cars like the Peugeot 207 (main picture) have fuelled the drive to small diesels, but is petrol fighting back? Alternatively you can buy a petrol and LPG Proton GEN-2 (top) for the same price as a standard petrol model

calorific value and consequent mpg is slightly lower than petrol and it will cost at least £1,500 to convert an existing vehicle.

There are more LPG filling points across the country than before though and LPG costs about half that of petrol and diesel at the pump and emits less CO2 and with fewer NOx and particulates.

Electric

These should be cheap to run, but battery technology cannot yet guarantee ranges to sat-

isfy. There is the worry too that emissions are simply transferred from an exhaust pipe to the chimney of a fossil fuel-burning power station.

Biofuels

Fuel derived partly from vegetable matter appeals since plants absorb CO2 during growth and simply release it again when burned. Most road fuels in the UK will contain at least five per cent biofuel by next year, but there is concern that using arable land to grow 'biofuel' will strain global food supplies.

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- (06) **PEUGEOT 107 1.0 URBAN SEMI-AUTO**, 5 Dr, Met.Blue, Auto/Tiptronic, Air Con, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, 1 Owner, 33200 Miles, S/History, Ins. Grp 1, RFL £35 p.a.....**£5495**
- (Y) **HONDA CIVIC COUPE 1.7 VTEC AUTO**, 2 Dr, Silver, Air Con, PAS, Remote C/Locking, Alloys, E/F/Windows, ABS, 2 Owners, 33400 Miles, S/History, Ins. Grp 11.....**£3995**
- (03) **NISSAN MICRA 1.2 S AUTO**, 3 Dr, Silver, Power Steering, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, CD Player, 26900 Miles, S/History, Ins. Grp 2, RFL £145 p.a.....**£3895**

MANUALS

- (06) **TOYOTA YARIS 1.0 T3**, 3 Dr, Silver Grey, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, Airbags, CD Player, ONLY 15700 Miles, Ins. Grp 2, RFL £120 p.a.....**£5995**
- (54) **TOYOTA YARIS 1.0 T SPIRIT**, 5 Dr, Met.Blue, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, Alloys, CD Player, 40000 Miles, S/History, Ins. Grp 2, RFL £120 p.a.....**£5495**
- (06) **KIA PICANTO 1.1 LX**, 5 Dr, Met.Blue, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, CD, Player, 1 Owner, ONLY 15000 MILES, S/History, Ins. Grp 3.....**£4995**
- (03) **HONDA JAZZ 1.4 SE**, 5 Dr, Met.Pale Green, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, Honda + 1 Owner, ONLY 26000 MILES, S/History, Ins. Grp 3.....**£4995**

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- (55) **KIA PICANTO 1.1 LX**, 5 Dr, Red, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, CD Player, 1 Owner, ONLY 6000 MILES, S/History, Ins. Grp 3, RFL £120 p.a.....**£4695**
- (52) **HONDA CIVIC 1.4 S**, 5 Dr, Silver, Air Conditioning, Power Steering, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, 28100 Miles, 5 Service Stamps, Ins. Grp 4.....**£4495**
- (04) **MAZDA 323 1.6 GXI**, 5 Dr, White, Air Conditioning, Power Steering, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, 40000 Miles, 2 Owners, Part Service History, Ins. Grp 7.....**£4295**
- (54) **HYUNDAI GETZ 1.1 GSI**, 3 Dr, Silver, Power Steering, Central Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, CD, ONLY 15000 Miles, 1 Owner, Service History, Ins. Grp 4, RFL £120 p.a.....**£3795**
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Drive clever – save better

By **STEVE LOADER**

MAN and machine in harmony can slash pounds off your motoring bill.

The key is to downsize and run a cheaper car and then save even more by smarter driving and journey planning.

Avoid short journeys and get fitter by walking or cycling; a cold engine wastes fuel and can produce 60 per cent more pollution than a warm one and short car journeys require extra servicing and wear the engine faster.

If you must drive then follow these tips from the Institute of Advanced Motorists and RAC Foundation:

- Plan your route to save strain on car and driver. Take the most direct route – a sat nav can help – and go off peak if possible. If you commute, think about car sharing, Park and Ride bus schemes or other public transport.
- Have your vehicle serviced regularly. Neglected engines reduce fuel economy by ten per cent or more. Catalytic converters do clean emissions, but only when they are properly maintained.
- Check tyres – under-inflated tyres need replacing more often (itself an environmental problem), are dangerous and waste fuel. Check pressures weekly.
- Obey speed limits to save money and stay legal. Feather the throttle as you reach cruising speed; 56mph uses 25 per cent less fuel than 70mph and a smoother driving style saves fuel.
- Accelerate briskly without racing the engine – pulling away too fast uses up to 60 per cent more fuel. Intelligent gear changes



SAVINGS: You can cut motoring bills through better driving and downsizing to a city car like the new Nissan Pixo or Skoda Fabia supermini

at modest engine speeds can save up to 15 per cent in fuel.

- Reduce drag – remove roof racks and carriers when not in use. Open windows cause drag and lower fuel economy. Remove unnecessary and heavy boot luggage and accessories and wide tyres that add rolling resistance. Air conditioning costs fuel too so

try to use the fan and vents unassisted.

- Buy green fuel and use less. Look for low sulphur diesel (City diesel) or cleaner petrol (low sulphur/aromatics). Consider a conversion to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) – half the price of petrol and cleaner.

- Think ahead – there is no point rushing and then having to brake suddenly.

- Be a tank miser. Why fill the tank right to the brim and slow down your car by carrying more weight than is necessary?

- Turn off the engine after two minutes to save fuel and emissions if stuck in a jam.

• **For more eco driving tips see Julie Maddocks' online video report at:**
<http://www.yourkenttv.co.uk/community>.

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■ **Robins and Day Motors** in Maidstone, Canterbury and Rochester are offering MOTs from £39.99. Service and MOT from £129.99 and seasonal checks from £19.99

■ **H&H Flooring** in Deal is offering free underlay upgrade on all carpets

■ **KOS** is offering big button digital cordless phones just £24.99 save £20

■ **Canterbury Hyundai** in Canterbury is offering £29.95 MOTs while you wait

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New car deal starts

By **STEVE LOADER**

REACTION to the Government's £2,000 incentive towards scrapping an older car in return for a new one was lukewarm from trade and customers alike.

Carmakers and dealers could also be forgiven for biting their lips on learning that they must contribute half the Government's two grand giveaway.

Nevertheless, most of the trade has not only embraced the deal, but put extra incentives on the table, such as even more cash, extra specification and zero per cent finance – though this is no longer a big deal when interest rates are so low.

On the other hand, consumers with savings will know they are receiving precious little return and it is tempting to seek a psychological boost from buying a new motor that should be cheaper to fuel and tax.

Canny buyers will also know they should get a shed-load of discount at the moment, whether or not they currently drive a 'banger' ten years old or more and qualify for the scrap-price grant.

Of course, anyone who has a scrapper to cash in has a further bargaining chip not to be tossed lightly into the deal.

Britain's market leader Ford says buyers can expect up to £5,000 off some of its cars, including the scrappage allowance.

Look at the extremes of the market to make the best use of the scheme though. A £2,000 grant buys a lot of any small car like the Hyundai i10 – Germany's scrappage scheme



OFF THE ROAD: The new scheme encourages you to send your old car for scrap

has boosted i10 sales by 662 per cent – and you could not expect usually to get a few hundred quid off when profit margins on small cars match their size. However, a £2,000 handout makes it more affordable to someone on a tight budget and it will be cheaper to fuel and tax and better for the environment.

At the other end of the scale, what about that Beemer you always wanted? Check out a BMW 116d (from £17,605). You would normally struggle to get money off – certainly not £2,000 – and you start saving even more with an average of 60mpg.

Anyone buying a new car is still taking a big step though unless they aim to save longer term through lower fuel bills and road tax.

The Government is using escalating road

tax or VED (vehicle excise duty) to drive people into smaller and cleaner cars and a new scale of zero to £405/year came into force on April 1 (see previous page) and is set to become tougher.

By 2010, gas guzzling limos or 4x4s may face £950 road tax in the first year, although anyone spending £50-100,000 on a car is unlikely to be put off by such a paltry sum. As a result, some manufacturers have produced models exempt from VED, by sneaking below the 100g/km CO2 emissions mark into band-A.

Most manufacturers also now have an 'Eco' sub-branding for their lowest emission models – Vauxhall uses the ecoFLEX sub-branding.

Brilliant as they are, 'eco' models often cost more since they have diesel engines and spe-

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to make more sense



INCENTIVE: Vauxhall has embraced the Government's scrappage programme, but is topping up the £2,000 treasury/maker grant with cashbacks and other deals on certain models – the popular Corsa supermini qualifies for zero per cent finance as well as grant aid

cial 'green' features that do not yet deliver the economy of scale savings available to makers across the whole model range.

What is more, saving road tax is not such a great incentive when many conventional superminis sit in the lowest road tax band of £35 a year anyway; over three years with an

eco model, saving £105 is irrelevant if you spend more on buying that car and are then putting expensive diesel in the tank.

So, check out conventional equivalents of eco models and don't dismiss petrol power; that fuel is still cheaper and makes sense for low mileage users, while emission and consumption levels

are closing the gap on the diesel equivalents.

Finally, look again at what you have to part-exchange; you might have lost a packet in depreciation on that big 4x4, but work out what it will cost you to run it for the next three years – it might be a lot less than the cost of chopping it for a new car.

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Lexterten furniture store in Westgate-on-Sea is offering £100 off Elevating TV cabinets

■ Old Sawmills furniture store in Ashford is offering 20 per cent off all showroom items

■ Oliver Carpets in Ramsgate and Herne Bay is offering 10 per cent off when you spend more than £250

■ Pomphreys Motors in Bapchild, Sittingbourne is offering half-price MOT with every service

■ Village Hotel in Maidstone is offering £5 off the carvery lunch on any Bank Holiday Monday

■ Living Out log cabin store in Chestfield, Maidstone, is offering free installation on all standard range of cabins

■ Aylesford Self Storage in Aylesford is offering three months' free storage for a year for all new document storage clients

■ County Garage in Herne Bay is offering free health check and free 29-point including wash and vacuum

■ Baileys Nissan Motors in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off MOTs

■ Medway Stoves solid fuel heating store in Medway is offering 15 per cent off all stoves and installations purchased before June 30, 2009

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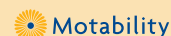
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Cars shown for illustration purposes only. Finance subject to status. 1£35 road fund licence applies to Matiz 0.8 S. 116.73mpg applies to Matiz 0.8 S. Chevrolet range fuel consumption in mpg (L/100 km), urban 40.9 (6.9) to 26.4 (10.7), extra urban 67.3 (4.2) to 38.7 (7.3), combined 54.3 (5.2) to 32.8 (8.6) the official co2 emission is 119 to 225 g/km.

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Make sure you look hot for summer

■ One 4 Hairdressing and Beauty

ONE 4 Hairdressing and Beauty in Canterbury is a new salon run by a mother and daughter team.

Sue Pordage has been running the business for 14 years under its previous name of Salon 143, while daughter Susie has been working as a hairdresser in Canterbury specialising in hair extensions and wedding hair.

Susie has been training with leading hair extension company Racoon, who use real hair sourced ethically to bring the best out of someone's crowning glory.

The salon prides itself on being able to match any shade of hair colour and also can add highlights without any colour damage.

Free hair extensions consultations are also offered and Racoon products are stocked so that people can look after their new styles.

On Tuesdays and Wednesdays the business stays open until 9pm.

Other beauty services on offer include waxing, massage, manicures, facials and make-up while the popular range of Goldwell products are also stocked.

Goldwell – which won product of the year for its 60-second treatment – has a fantastic summer range for customers to take away on holiday so that they can ensure their hair does not get damaged and colours do not fade.

"Our beauty room is spacious and has plenty of natural light," said Sue.

"We are always ready to help people to look their very best and ensure that they leave our salon looking and feeling as good as they can."

"Now that summer is here we will be looking to make sure our customers are looking great for their holidays."

One 4 Hairdressing and Beauty, 143 Station Road, Herne Bay, 01227 374640



Hair: Nick Malenko with the Racoon Artistic Team.

Makeup: Liz Arimoro.

Photography: David Goldman



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SWALE SHOPPING

Shock horror, author signing at Bluewater

INTERNATIONAL bestselling teenage horror writer Rachel Caine will be making a rare appearance at Bluewater this weekend.

The author of the Weather Warden and Morganville Vampires books will be signing copies at Waterstone's at 11am on Saturday. The fifth book in the Morganville Vampires series, Lord of Misrule, is not due to be published until July but there is a possibility that copies will be available to buy at the signing.

Fly along to Dove Spa for special promotions

TO celebrate the grand re-opening of Dove Spa Bromley, customers are being offered some very special promotions.

Until May 31, new and existing customers can enjoy a Hydra facial treatment for just £10. Book any Dove Spa Signature facial treatment after the Hydra and receive a free In My Defence Anti Pollution Serum, worth £30.

Virgin Active members will receive a 25 per cent discount during May. Call 0844 800 2152 or visit www.dovespa.co.uk.

It's a Breese making cash from your junk

A SPRING clear-out could result in extra cash with the help of the new Collectables Manual.

Written by TV presenter, journalist and consultant Jamie Breese, the book uncovers the hidden value in those old toys, phone cards, postcards and ceramics. From Bagpuss to the Beatles, the book helps to identify the gems among the junk.

The Collectables Manual is published by Haynes and is priced at £16.99.

Bring on the barbecue and enjoy the outdoors

ENJOY alfresco dining in the great outdoors during National Barbecue Week.

The annual event runs from bank holiday Monday to Sunday, May 31. With the British public becoming ever more daring with their tastebuds, many are experimenting with more exotic foods than the standard burgers and sausages.

Find inspiration for your barbecue bashes online at www.nationalbbqweek.co.uk. More advice on alfresco living can be found at www.gastro-alfresco.co.uk.

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See www.tropicanakids.co.uk.

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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY JAMES ALEXANDRE

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST BBC1, Saturday, May 16

THERE are few non-sporting events on television big enough to force a postponement of even the best-laid plans.

In my naivety I'd unwittingly scheduled a night out on Saturday, without reckoning on the strangely alluring power of a Norwegian violinist.

Cupid-faced Alexander Rybak wooed the 100 million-plus audience with his whimsical storytelling charm, smashing Eurovision records in the process.

The annual kitsch fest, now in its 53rd year, has undergone some changes including a supposed end to the mutual backslapping between nations which characterised this competition in recent years.

Of even greater significance, the BBC in their wisdom decided to replace the much-loved irreverent commentary of Terry Wogan, whose musings provided as much entertainment as the performers on stage, with that of another Irish chat show host (albeit with mixed results).

Graham Norton was given the task of filling those voluminous shoes and the size of the occasion seemed at first to overwhelm him.

His initial sarcastic put-downs came across as clumsy attempts to emulate the great Wogan, but the increasingly colourful acts on stage helped him naturally assume the great man's mantle.

One wonderfully-wry observation was about how the Ukraine entry's elaborate set-up, which included exotic Roman centurion dancers, required the singer to re-mortgage her home.

Norton seamlessly quipped: "So, if you are looking for a cheap property in the Ukraine area..."

As for the UK effort, our hopes



TOUGH ACT: Norton took over from old Terry

were pinned firmly to rising starlet Jade Ewen. Joined by Andrew Lloyd Webber on piano, her song *It's My Time* was typical musical grandstanding, a big ballad in the same mould of so many of the impresario's West End shows.

I didn't find it particularly inspiring, but somehow most of Europe's 42 nations dialled up to propel her performance to fifth in the table, the UK's highest finish since 2002.

Disillusioned by our own contribution, I was moved to vote for Turkey's offering, Hadise's *Dum Tek Tek* which hit all the right notes, so much so the rest of the UK awarded them the honourary 'douze' points.

But the ensuing avalanche of support for Norway's new favourite son confirmed why the show still draws in huge numbers.

Despite each country's obvious partiality for their nearest neighbours and the occasional penchant for the odd or quirky, the grinning youngster with his trusty violin managed to capture the heart of a continent.

Having passed the first hurdle, could it be only another 29 years before it's "arise, Sir Graham?"

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

USUALLY you keep a tight control over your emotions, but that may not be the case this week. A difficult relative could make you very angry. You resent their attempts to divert you from a treasured ambition. Keep in mind you can pursue this goal now you are no longer under their wing.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)

YOU'RE more ambitious than ever so you can't just sit idly by and watch other people steal your thunder. You may have to defy an authority figure if you aim to get noticed and although your boss won't like it much your behaviour will win you the attention you need from people who matter.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)

RESIST the urge to use your social status for personal gain. If you're trying to win somebody's heart, it's better to keep a low profile. Your beloved isn't impressed by flashy gestures; he or she wants to know the real you. Arrange a casual date where the two of you can just talk.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

THERE'S lots of pushing and pulling involved in a close relationship. On one hand, you're delighted by your friend's practical methods. On the other, you don't like having your emotional approach dismissed. There has to be a compromise. Don't lay a guilt trip on a negligent friend.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

IT will be challenging getting your ideas across. At times it feels like people are deliberately twisting your words. Maybe it's because they're threatened by your plans. Instead of trying to win their approval, put your agenda into motion. People will respect you a lot more for it.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)

WORKING behind the scenes has mixed results. On one hand, you can take your rivals by surprise. On the other, you could be branded as deceptive. Don't pretend to be more experienced than you are or you could be exposed. Show respect to someone with extensive experience.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)

DEALING with somebody from a different background can be difficult. It's hard to read their body language. When in doubt, ask a direct question and you'll avoid confusion. If your new friend offers to teach you a skill, accept. You will thrive on the intellectual stimulation.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

YOUR health could be delicate this week, so take it easy. Overindulging in food or drink will slow you down when you have to be efficient. Friends can help you stay on the straight and narrow. Tell them you need to follow a strict diet and stick to a brisk exercise regimen.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

YOUR financial picture is mixed. Taking on an unorthodox job will bring in plenty of extra cash, but you'll have to restrain yourself from spending it all. Friends have a way of talking you into costly endeavours. Instead of caving in to peer pressure be content with what you have.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)

TAKING charge of a group will bring both pleasure and pain. On the plus side, you'll be able to put your knowledge to good use. However, some members of the team will be jealous of your success. Don't bother trying to win them over. Keep doing the best job you can.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)

HOLDING money and the power it gives you over somebody else will result in disaster. If they want to part ways let them leave with the stuff they brought to the union or your reputation as a honest person will be destroyed. If you are the victim of a bad break up, be good to yourself.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)

WHEN dealing with a youngster you need to remember that you're a role model. You can't ask a kid to abide by a moral code that you don't follow. You'll either have to change your ways or re-examine your values. Financial matters could get in the way of a relationship.

- To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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CRYPTIC CLUES

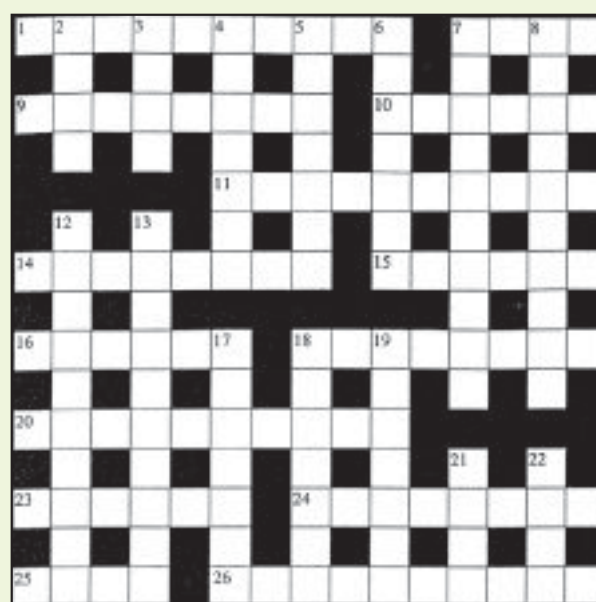
ACROSS

- 1 But this store does not have a monopoly (6,4)
7 Drive south round sainted Cornish town (4)
9 Pair is entering genuine retribution (8)
10 Drive black aero-engine (6)
11 Head off finally? (10)
14 Relaxed but gloomy (8)
15 Jack, clown stopping short, is very strong man (6)
16 Gang leader strangely urged, having feeling of resentment (6)
18 Slim lady cavorted in a depressing way! (8)
20 Winning - in a game with horse chestnuts, say! (10)
23 Faster sort of air attack (6)
24 Number of starting-places on golf-links, or on the wagon (8)
25 Be including semi-ripe cheese (4)
26 Breathtaking (10)

DOWN

- 2 In the horsebox encouraged cattle (4)
3 Informer's name on chest (4)
4 Live out classy part remaining (7)
5 Hag coming from chalet, about 50 (7)
6 One exercises in part wall (7)
7 Unimportant abstract (10)
8 Happening to take posh friend finally (10)
12 After teatime get publicity for somewhere for the rest of the night (4-6)
13 Poor Dean with quite a problem (10)
17 Some of the clientele mentioned part (7)
18 Ne'er-do-well on fishing-boat (7)
19 Put forward plan that gets Gus upset (7)
21 Fleece that might be pulled over one's eyes (4)
22 Green cloth? (4)

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QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Greet (5,5)
7 Rescue (4)
9 Smoked beef (8)
10 Habituated (6)
11 Military power (10)
14 Mb in computing (8)
15 Gambling (6)
16 Greek goddess of wisdom (6)
18 Plant with nodding flowers (8)
20 Evade capture (4,3,3)
23 Nap (6)
24 Gypsy dancing (8)
25 Ego (4)
26 Setting aside (10)

DOWN

- 2 Leg-pull (4)
3 Bird of prey (4)
4 Rumour (7)
5 Moonies (anag.) (7)
6 Lively party (7)
7 Substantial repast (6,4)
8 Camera attachment (10)
12 Plague (10)
13 Mackintosh (10)
17 Attain (7)
18 Cone-bearing tree (7)
19 Ancient Greek musical instrument (7)
21 Yank (4)
22 Religious image (4)

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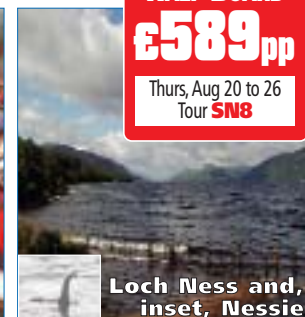
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Pipers at the Tattoo



Loch Ness and, inset, Nessie

The Scottish Highlands are spectacular with majestic mountains and mirror-like lochs making the perfect backdrop to small cosy towns, isolated crofts, towering castles and pagoda-topped distilleries. Our hotel is in the heart of the Highlands, well-placed for our touring itinerary. The holiday includes reserved seats to see the magnificent Edinburgh Tattoo, a Dolphin Cruise and excursions to Loch Ness and more. To ensure a relaxed pace and more time to enjoy the Scottish Highlands, we take the overnight sleeper train from London Euston to Inverness, and an overnight return to London, with cabin, morning tea/coffee and a snack.

PRICE INCLUDES: Escorted from London • 4 nights sharing a twin/double bedded room at the Lodge Hotel, Newtonmore • London - Inverness overnight sleeper train outbound & return • 3 dinners, 4 breakfasts & 1 lunch • All excursions • Reserved seat at the Edinburgh Tattoo • Executive coach touring in Scotland

KOS
media

For more information and bookings call **01895 83 33 33**
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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS No87

EASY

8	5	9	6	7	2	4	3	1
6	2	4	5	3	1	8	9	7
7	3	1	8	4	9	2	5	6
3	8	6	4	2	7	5	1	9
9	7	5	3	1	8	6	2	4
4	1	2	9	5	6	3	7	8
5	6	7	1	8	3	9	4	2
2	4	8	7	9	6	1	5	3
1	9	3	2	8	4	7	8	5

MEDIUM

2	3	8	6	7	4	1	9	5
9	6	1	2	5	3	8	4	7
4	7	5	8	9	1	6	3	2
3	4	7	5	6	2	9	8	1
1	2	6	9	4	8	7	5	3
5	8	9	1	3	7	4	2	8
7	5	2	4	8	6	3	1	9
8	9	3	7	1	6	2	5	4
8	1	4	3	2	9	5	7	8

HARD

7	9	3	1	6	4	5	8	2
8	1	6	7	5	2	9	3	4
5	4	2	9	3	8	1	6	7
3	6	7	4	9	5	8	2	1
9	5	1	8	2	3	7	4	6
2	8	4	8	1	7	3	5	9
4	3	9	2	8	1	6	7	5
6	7	5	3	4	9	2	1	8
1	2	8	5	7	6	4	9	3

CRYPTIC SOLUTION No87

ACROSS: 1 Bastille Day 9 Nimrod 10 Eulogia 12 Rejoice 14 Torquay 15 Ventilation 16 Ike Ike Net 19 Regrettable 22 Sweater 23 Lambast 24 Afflict 25 Brazil 26 Candlelight. **DOWN:** 2 Abidjan 3 Termini 4 Lad 5 Electric eel 6 Aileron 7 Agouti 8 Mary Celeste 11 Driving seat 13 Exaggerated 18 Tee off 19 Retsina 20 Timpani 21 Bearish. 25 Bye.

QUICK SOLUTION No88

ACROSS: 1 Bring 4 Cassette 8 Little by little 10 Sartorial 11 Repay 12 Arum 13 Assassins 17 Sketched 18 Gala 22 Green 24 Interlude 3 Gallon 4 Cable 5 Selfless 6 Preceded 27 Lotto. **DOWN:** 2 25 Error. 20 Cited 21 Pencil 22 Error.

Answers to all of this week's quizzes can be found on our website



■ BY PAUL MCGURK

"JUST listen," says our guide. "Listen to the peace and quiet."

Our boat has ground to a halt in a semi-prehistoric setting on the surface of the Sapote tributary of the Amazon, a riot of greenery and dark waters all around us.

Then you hear the rustling of trees, the calls of hidden creatures and the buzzing of insects, and realise that this place, a million miles from anywhere, is never, ever quiet.

Welcome to the jungle.

Departing from the jungle city of Iquitos, in Peru, our 60ft MV Delphin riverboat snakes its way along tributaries of the Amazon few people have seen.

Guided by Adonay and Juan-Luis, the

All life carries on up the jungle

sensation of our 20ft skiffs shooting across the brown surface of the river is thrilling enough.

Every conceivable creature is there to be spotted – stripy three-toed sloths, lazy iguanas, white-faced saki monkeys, squirrel monkeys with their post-watershed behaviour and howler monkeys that send out eerie cries.

There are opportunities to catch piranhas with some meat on a stick at the Caro Curahuayte tributary.

Charming by day, the river takes on a different, yet alluring, character after sunset.

Creatures appear in the darkness. A clown tree frog is briefly in my hands before it hops

into the undergrowth, while a hairy, pink-toed tarantula crawls up the limb of a tree not four feet away from my head. It's fair to say that the Amazon is not the place to go if you have issues with beasts and creepy crawlies.

With mosquitos in abundance, you will need to be well stocked with repellent, plus anti-malaria medication and other vaccines.

If all this sounds like roughing it, the contrast could not be sharper with the comforts of life aboard the Delphin.

You can relax on the top deck with a pisco sour – a cocktail made with Peru's national spirit – and in the dining room you can enjoy

first-class gourmet meals, including catfish and giant snails served in the shell.

Your first stop in Peru is likely to be the capital Lima. For an overnight stay, the Miraflores Park Hotel by the sea is one of the best options.

Lima is Peru's gastronomic capital, boasting coastal, Andean and even jungle cuisine. With fishing being a major local industry, seafood markets are the ideal place to find fresh fish.

Lima Cathedral, a study in Gothic grandeur, boasts a chilling trip through the catacombs underneath, with the skulls and bones of generations of people buried in its walkways, even as Sunday Mass goes on above.

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FACT FILE: PERU



Time difference	-Five hours (GMT)
Capital	Lima
Language	Spanish
Population	28.2 million
Currency	£1 = 4.6 Nuevo Sol
Religion	Catholic
Climate	Diverse

Travel details

Paul McGurk travelled with Peru's tourist board PromPeru and travel operator Cox & Kings, which offers a six-night tailor-made Amazon Cruise itinerary combining a four-night cruise on the MV Delphin with two nights in Lima, from £2,775 including flights ex-London and Manchester with KLM via Amsterdam and LAN Peru, B&B (full-board on cruise), transfers and excursions. Add £35 supplement ex-Glasgow. Cox & Kings: 0207 873 5000 and www.coxandkings.co.uk

Destination information: see www.peru.info
Yellow fever, typhoid and hepatitis A vaccines are essential, plus plenty of sunblock. High-water season in the Amazon is December-May.





PROPERTY NEWS

Call for Government to act on energy saving

THE Federation of Master Builders has called on the Government to act in response to the draft Heat and Energy Saving Strategy consultation.

The aim of the consultation is a long-term plan to cut carbon emissions from both homes and businesses, and ultimately to reduce emissions by 80 per cent by 2050.

It is all part of the Government's growing commitment to reducing carbon emissions – thought to be one of the main factors responsible for the problem of global warming.

But the federation has said the wheels need to be put in motion now, with a delivery plan backed by financial incentives if all of Britain's homes are to be upgraded by 2030.

Brian Berry, director of external affairs, said: "The Government's aim to upgrade all of Britain's homes by 2030 is not going to succeed unless the financial incentives are put in place to create a new market for greener, more energy-efficient homes.

"Householders have still to be convinced about the merits of spending thousands of pounds on energy-efficient improvements with little prospect of seeing a return on their money.

"If the Government is serious about its commitment to upgrade our homes, it needs to introduce some financial incentives, such as cutting VAT to five per cent for home improvements; council tax rebates and/or the introduction of green mortgages."

Agency targets FTBs as market boosters

THE UK's largest online network of estate agents has offered its tips for first-time buyers who are considering taking their crucial first steps on to the property ladder.

Email4property.co.uk believes activity from this end of the market will accelerate over the summer months as improved affordability begins to infiltrate the housing market.

Steve Lees, head of marketing at email4property.co.uk, said: "With property prices at their most affordable for a number of years, now is proving an excellent time for first-time buyers to secure their first home.

"While lenders are taking a much more cautious approach at the moment, there are still some good deals out there for any buyers who are in a position to provide a reasonable deposit."



OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK: The slump in property values over the coming months may not be as bad as predicted and the price of your home could increase by the end of the year

Lloyds predicts upturn in market by year's end

■ BY NICK AMES

PROPERTY owners have negotiated the worst of the recession as house prices are set to rise again by the end of the year, according to the country's biggest lender.

Optimistic predictions that the market is to bottom out have come from experts at Lloyds, who have said that prices will now fall by just another six per cent before turning the corner.

As a result, by the end of the year, the market will begin to pick up again, with values starting to increase once more.

But other analysts have emphasised the worst is not quite over – and the coming months will not see any quick respite from the slump.

Optimistic

The forecast comes as financial commentators grow more optimistic about the outlook for the UK economy and stock market, with the FTSE 100 now showing a gain for the year.

Lloyds, which has a 30 per cent share of the mortgage market, previously thought house prices would fall 15 per cent this year – or a

drop of about 34 per cent from the August 2007 peak average price of £199,612.

However, the company's analysts now believe the decline is likely to be closer to ten per cent, with prices probably bottoming within months.

As a result, as prices are already down 3.8 per cent this year, according to the Halifax house price index, this means a further fall of just six per cent before the upturn.

Stephen Noakes, of Lloyds, said: "I think we will only see about ten per cent to 12 per cent falls this year.

"For the first time, people are thinking that house prices will increase over the next 12 months."

Other property experts are also giving more encouraging assessments of future market trends.

Ray Boulger, of brokers John Charcol, said he was of the opinion that house prices had only eight per cent left to fall before bottoming in the autumn and then increasing by three per cent by the end of the year.

Lloyds last week slashed the cost of deals for people who want to get on to the property ladder as price falls have slowed.

However, experts warn that there will continue to be falls in the coming months.

Martin Ellis, housing economist at the Halifax, said: "The average UK house price declined by 1.7 per cent in April, slightly less than the 1.9 per cent monthly fall in the previous month.

Affordable

"The house price-to-earnings ratio – a key measure of housing affordability – is at its lowest level since the autumn of 2002 at 4.26.

"Mortgage rate cuts have reduced monthly payments for the average existing borrower by £111 since October 2008, also boosting affordability. Mortgage approvals remain at historically very low levels.

"Rising unemployment, low consumer confidence and the reduced availability of credit are all expected to exert downward pressure on the housing market over the next few months.

"As a result, further house price declines are likely."

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Thorn Hill Road OIEO £165,000
Three bed, two receptions, wc, en-suite, garage & parking, central heating

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Reams Way £165,000
Five bedrooms. Kitchen/diner, two cloakrooms, en-suite. Garage & driveway.

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Halfway Road £159,995
Three bedrooms. Lounge / Diner. Double glazing. Gas fired heating system.

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Bourne Grove OIEO £155,000
Two bedroom bungalow. Double glazing, central heating, kitchen, gardens.

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Bayford Road £149,950
Three bed detached. Walking distance to town centre. Parking for 2 cars.

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Clement Close OIEO £145,000
3 bed, kitchen diner, conservatory, double glazing, gas central heating

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Vicarage Road OIEO £140,000
2 bed, 2/3 receptions, cloakroom, central heating. Double glazing. gardens.

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Chalkwell Road OIEO £140,000
Four bedrooms, two receptions, kitchen/breakfast room, 60' rear garden.

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Furze Hill Crescent OIEO £140,000
Extended 3 Bed Semi Detached. Rear Garden. Conservatory. No Chain.

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Raleigh Way OIEO £130,000
3Bed Semi Detached. No Onward Chain. Double Glazed, Central Heating.

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Emerald View £120,000
Three Bed Terrace. No Chain. Double Glazing, Front and Rear Gardens

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Burnup Bank £119,995
3 bed terrace, kitchen/diner, double glazing, gas central heating, garage, parking

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Romney Court £115,000
2/3 bed town house. In need of modernisation, garage, parking & garden.

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Seager Road OIEO £112,000
3 Bed Victorian Terrace. Lounge, Dining Room, Central Heating, Double Glazing.

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Leysdown Road £100,000
Land. Property to be demolished. Planning permission for two 2 bed semi's.

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Hillside Avenue OIEO £100,000
Two Bedroom Semi Detached Bungalow. No Chain. Rushenden Location.

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Grovehurst Road OIEO £99,950
Two bed terrace, two receptions, double glazing, central heating, gardens

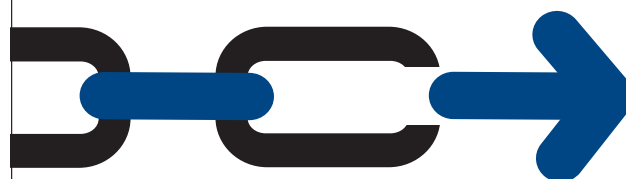
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Copperfield Park OIEO £60,000
Two bedrooms, double glazing, 8 and a half month occupancy, rear garden

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Your Move are pleased to offer to the market for sale, set in Athol Place, this property with 3 bedrooms. The property comprises of entrance leading into a hallway with cloakroom and door leading onto lounge and a kitchen to the ground floor and on the first floor are 3 bedrooms and bathroom/WC. The property benefits from gas central heating and double glazing where stated, front and rear gardens, there is also a garage and drive. Viewings can be arranged via Your Move to appreciate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Your Move are now in receipt of an offer for the sum of £68,000 for 94 Whiting Crescent Faversham. Anyone wishing to place an offer on the property should contact Your Move, 11a Market Place Faversham, Kent ME13 7AG 01795 536955 before exchange of contracts.

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 Options From 25% • Ground Floor
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- Dining Room
- Kitchen

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- Kitchen
- Gas Central Heating System

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 Kitchen Breakfast Room • Lounge •
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 Lounge • Kitchen/Dining Room
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- Kitchen
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 Side Garden
- Family Bathroom

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- Kitchen/Breakfast
 Room
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 Bedroom
- Downstairs W/C

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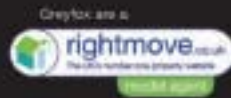
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 • Rear Garden • Allocated Parking
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 Bedrooms • Sizeable Reception
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 0845 370 9728

- No chain
- Open to offers
- Detached House
- Four Bedrooms

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- Two Bedrooms
- Character Oast House
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- Excellent Condition
- Modern Decor
 throughout

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REF: 00000491

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- CONSERVATORY
- DRIVEWAY
- SINGLE GARAGE
- VIEWING ESSENTIAL!!

REF: GSP02585

**Chatham****£499,950**

- 4 BEDROOM DETACHED FAMILY HOME
- 4 SEPARATE RECEPTION ROOMS
- EN-SUITE ,TO MASTER BEDROOM
- UTILITY ROOM
- IN & OUT DRIVE
- GARAGE
- SOUGHT AFTER LOCATION (I.O.O)
- SO MUCH MORE, VIEWING A MUST!

REF: GCP01634

**Wigmore****£485,000**

- 5 BEDROOM DETACHED
- TWO RECEPTION ROOMS
- DOUBLE GLAZING
- GAS CENTRAL HEATING

REF: 00000131

**Newington****£495,000**

- 4 BEDROOM DETACHED
- PERIOD PROPERTY
- 3 RECEPTIONS
- HOUSE SWAP AVAILABLE

REF: 0000000017

**Newington****£390,000**

- 4 BEDROOM DETACHED
- 3 RECEPTION ROOMS
- EN-SUITE TO BED 3
- GOOD SIZED REAR GARDEN

REF: GRV02606



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Ground floor, one bedroom flat with no onward chain. Well presented. Double glazing.

Borden



£79,950

No Chain. One bedroom flat in Borden village. Parking. First floor accommodation.

PUBLIC NOTICE



104 Grovehurst Road, Kemsley, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10

We are acting for the mortgagees and have received an offer of £84,950 on the above property. Any interested parties must submit any higher offers in writing to the selling agent before an exchange of contracts takes place.

Sittingbourne



£104,995

1 bed ground floor apartment with a garden! Excellent condition. Access to local amenities. Allocated parking.

Newington



£114,950

No chain. Access to mainline railway station and local shops. This property requires some DIY improvement.

Sittingbourne



£135,000

Three bedroom house. Driveway. Integral garage. Church Milton. Central heating. Rear garden approx 35'.

Iwade



£175,000

Three bedroom end of terrace house, conservatory, downstairs cloakroom. Excellent order throughout.

Sittingbourne



£129,995

No chain. This house has three double bedrooms, central heating and double glazing.

Iwade



Offers in excess of £174,000

Three bedrooms. Benefits from en-suite, downstairs cloakroom and lounge/dining room approximately 26'.

Sittingbourne



£185,000

South Sittingbourne. Three beds with conservatory, driveway and garage. Double glazing, central heating.

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WOMEN seeking men

SWEET DEBS

Hopeful, happy, shy girl, 22, loves all the normal stuff about life, searching for a mature guy, 24-39, for loving friendship and happiness. Box 880373

SINGLE DADS WELCOME

Lovely single mum, 23, cuddly and curvy, 5ft6, blonde and blue-eyed, like a drink, animals, reading, cinema, looking for honest, trustworthy and caring male. Box 451249

MATCH OF THE DAY!

Fun-to-be-with, blonde female, 25, 5ft2, a woman who loves football! Enjoys going out and staying in, looking for a like-minded man, to be her soul mate. Box 446494

NOT YOUR BROWN-EYED GIRL, BUT...

Blue eyed brunette, 27, 5ft1, loves films, walking, darts, pool, singing, me time! Looking for honest guy with GSOH, for friendship and more? Box 451385

ME AND YOU

Medium build girl, 28, brown hair, green eyes, seeking honest guy who looks after number one, for lasting relationship. Box 451834

GETTING TO KNOW YOU...

Sociable girl, 28, loves people, social, seeks similar male, 58-62, for a lasting relationship. Box 446756

GIVE AND TAKE IN LOVE

Loving loyal female, 30, blue eyes, brown hair, seeking LTR with male 30-35, 6ft+, no baggage, in the Maidstone area. Box 448471

SEEKING MR DARCY

Warm, kind and sincere woman, 31, lots of love and loyalty for the right person, seeking an honest genuine man with a good heart. Box 451004

HAPPY SHOPPER!

Easygoing female, 32, enjoys shopping, football, eating out, cosy night in, WLTW loving, caring white male, 35-47, for long-term, loving relationship. No time-wasters. Box 444214

STACEY LOOKING FOR HER GAVIN

Slim, blue-eyed beauty, 31, Brunette, Wells, loving, caring, very genuine. Wanting someone to cuddle up with at night and have lots of laughs with. Box 881494

CUDDLY FEMALE

32, 5ft9, brown hair, curvy figure, enjoys having fun and a laugh and WLTW nice, kind gent. Box 439402

HORSES FOR COURSES...

Caring, loving, affectionate female, 32, 5ft2, blonde, likes walking, horse riding, animals, seeks affectionate male, 30-40, for lasting, loving relationship. Box 384013

FIT FOR FUN

Petite, dark-haired girl, 33, 5ft, fit, loves badminton, cinema and more, searching for an active man, with heart and soul. Box 881047

SOUND GOOD?

Hello I'm 35, kind, caring and non-smoking, enjoy cooking, cinema, music, dining in and out, looking for that special someone to enjoy a relationship with. Box 447595

LIVING IT

Fair-haired female, 35, 5ft, loves the gym, pubs, nights out and fine company, searching for fun bloke, for life, love and laughter. Box 881011

HISTORIC MEETING?

Mum of three, 36, long mousey hair, blue eyes, interested in historical places, music, eating out, seeks kind, caring, genuine male 36-49, non smoker, for LTR. Box 440693

LOOKING FOR A LOVING CHAP

Ashford-based woman looking for an honest, friendly, caring and loving man. I have two kids and enjoy the usual things in life. Box 446985

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Good looking woman, 37, 5ft2, brown hair/eyes, 2 kids. Looking for new friends and hopefully someone special. Box 446039

ON THE LOOKOUT FOR LOVE

37yr old female, 2 kids, slim, brown hair and eyes, 5ft2, looking for a caring, loving, honest and trusting male to be my someone special. Box 446552

GALLOP AHEAD!

Maidstone-based woman, 36, 5ft5, slim, blue eyes. I'm caring, honest and have 4 children. I enjoy drives and horse riding and WLTW honest, reliable man. Box 451311

PERHAPS PERHAPS

Fun, bubbly, outgoing blonde, late 30s, down-to-earth, with GSOH, searching for tall, genuine fella, for fun, friendship and more? Box 451385

WHERE LOVE TAKES US

Attractive woman with a great personality to go with, looking to meet a fit, tall, well-built black male, 35-55, for fun times and hopefully romance. Box 450650

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

Nice looking 41yr old mixed race female, likes cinema, walks, eating out, bowling, WLTW a genuine white male with gosh for a fun filled relationship. Box 450890

CHARM ME

Tall, blonde Russian girl, 42, from St Leonards, searching for single and sincere man, for friendship and more. Box 451019

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

Hello, I'm Nikki, 41yr young, 5ft1, enjoys dining out, cinema and dancing, seeking a male for friendship, possible romance and fun times. Box 444796

PROFESSIONAL

Fun bubbly sexy black female, 42, outgoing, positive, fun-loving, seeks charming male to have fun and enjoy life with. Box 451744

ACTIVE TYPE

Lively, energetic and fun loving mum, 42, I'm 5ft10, petite, pretty, blonde/brown hair/hazel eyes. WLTW mixed race/black gent, to share good times with. Box 451819

COSY TIMES TOGETHER

Fun-loving female, 42, looking for someone who can make me laugh and enjoys country walks, films, travelling and a nice evening cuddled up. Box 881545

A WARM HEART AND GSOH

Lovely bubbly mum, 43, 5ft6, green eyes, dark hair, medium build, loves salsa dancing, new things, bowling, quiet nights in... Looking for companionship and more. Box 880090

MEND A BROKEN HEART

Single mum, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 908053

SEIZE THE DAY

Loving female, 36, 5ft4, brown hair, green eyes, likes socialising, staying in, seeks genuine male for friendship and more. Box 428686

BLONDE AMBITION

Single mum, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 908053

CUTE AS CAN BE

Cute, single mum of 4, 38yrs old, Kent-based, into most things, looking for friendship or possibly romance. Box 887983

ENTHUSIASM ENCOURAGED!

Lovely pretty big-busted lady, 39, medium build, 5ft5, lots of energy! likes the gym, reading, new experiences! seeking a nice man for potential exciting relationship! Box 446724

FREE AD placement, call:
0808 156 5339
(Calls are free; mobile rates may vary; check with your provider)

COLLECT your messages:
0906 550 4335
(Calls cost £1/min; contact your service provider for details)

JOINED AT THE HIP

Sociable petite girl with great SOH, 40, blonde, sociable, love football! Looking for fun guy with great SOH for inseparable partnership. Box 880434

TIME TO LIVE AGAIN

Lovely 40yr old mum, average build, brown hair, blue eyes, 5ft2, bubbly and GSOH...would like friendship and maybe more with the right man. Box 880149

A NICE BOTTLE OF WINE

Lovely, glossy brunette, 39yr old, petite, bubbly and loving, enjoys theatre, music and eating out, WLTW a professional, loving and tactile male for a relationship. Box 442551

NO TIES

Lonely, bored, professional Tunbridge Wells Asian lady, 40, WLTW slim, single, solvent, professional white male 40-50 for company, fun, love and laughter. Box 443573

BETWEEN US

Asian lady, 41, single, no ties, out going, fun loving, professional, looking for a white male, genuine, professional and solvent. Box 451900

A FAIRY TALE ENDING

Easy-going blonde animal lover, 41, easy-going and tactile, enjoy eating out, cinema and pubs, looking for a loyal, caring and funny man, 35-45. Box 451079

FANCY A DRINK?

Hi I'm Judith, 40, small, blonde hair, blue eyes, love the sea and water-sports, cinema, animals; WLTW fun-loving guy for friendship and see what happens. Box 448107

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LET'S CLICK

WLTW a nice guy with a similar nature: I'm an outgoing woman, 42, with brown hair and green eyes. Tell me about you! Box 446847

SWING THIS WAY

Sweet girl, 43, 5ft2, brown hair/eyes, nurse, searching for active man, for pubs, clubs and good times. Box 451028

ALONG THE SHORE

Recently divorced woman, 43, 5ft3, slim, hard-working, fun-loving, likes life, looking for a really nice and trust-worthy guy for a relationship. Box 451469

LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL

Good-looking brunette from Kent, 43, 5ft10, likes bowling, eating in/out etc. Looking for a good-looking guy, 35-45, with gosh for friendship/relationship. Box 450348

LOOKING FOR LTR

Single mum, petite, 44, brown hair/eyes, looking to share my life with a nice man, a Russian man would be great! I like cinema, pubs, music. Box 451373

TLC ON OFFER FOR THE RIGHT PERSON!

Blonde, blue eyed woman, 44, fun-loving, looking for Mr Right. I love going out, nights in, movies, walking, local gigs. WLTW the right man for TLC. Box 880280

THIS STATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Hard-working female, 41, 5'4", bubbly, independent woman, love to laugh, socialising with friends, looking for independent man who values TLC. Box 414156

A FINE ROMANCE

Pleasant female, 43, medium/large build, blue/green eyes, grown up children, beach walks, relaxing, reading, wining, seeks sincere male with GSOH, for LTR. Box 429071

COME ON DOWN!

Honest, bubbly female 45, long hair, slim, enjoys walking, cinema, socialising; seeks honest, friendly chap for friendship leading to more. Box 882693

COULD IT BE YOU?

Hi I'm 44, slim, 5ft8, a redhead, love nights out, socialising, looking for friendship initially and hopefully more later on. Box 889800

JOURNEY TOGETHER

Coy, shy, cheeky, loving black lady, 45, enjoys the sunshine, holidays, drinks, films and music, looking for a man to complete me as I will him. Box 451721

LOVING IT LARGE

Spiritual 44yr old female, enjoy gardening, cooking and walks on the beach, WLTW a warm, loving and caring male for friendship, maybe a LTR. Box 444803

ARE YOU THE ONE FOR ME?

Caring, cute female, 46, petite, likes socialising, dancing, travelling, good food, seeking intelligent, loyal man 42-52 for love and TLC. Box 444366

SOUND GOOD?

Hi I'm Lynne 46, 5ft4, dark hair/eyes, love reading/writing, going out, astrology, cars; seeking honest, caring, outgoing guy to enjoy music, fun, friendship and more! Box 449186

NOT ASKING FOR MUCH

Fun loving, bubbly, tactile lady, 50s, enjoys the good life, holidays and cosy nights in. I'm voluptuous & looking for a real man. Box 903560

WALKS ALONG THE COAST

Honest & sincere female, 58, tall, GSOH, loves country pubs, coasts, cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for relationship. Box 441622

HAPPY AS ME

Fun-loving, happy, contented lady, 60, 5ft4, enjoy theatre, dining out and having friends round for a meal, gardening and pets. Box 882812

SO SOMEONE TO SHARE LIFE WITH

Attractive retired lady, 63, loves swimming and cycling, cinema, eating out... seeks company with a great SOH, young-minded, to enjoy anything that happens. Box 451579

Women seeking women

IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS

I'm a 26yr old female, looking for new friends and maybe that special girl...let's have a meal and a drink and see what happens! Box 448722

FUN AND MAYBE MORE

Hi I'm 37, new to town and would love to meet some genuine companions to socialise with and go out and have some fun. Box 880564

FRIENDSHIP, HOPEFULLY MORE

Feminine woman, easygoing, caring, 45, long brown hair, blue eyes. I love music, eating out, reading/writing, drives, weekends away. WLTW boyish female. Box 448248

REPLY to an ad, call:
0905 211 0651
(Calls cost £1.20/min; contact your service provider for details)

REPLY by Text

You can choose to text the member's 6-digit box number followed by a space, then your message (max of 160 characters) and send to **82250** e.g. 654321 Hi my name is... Standard network rates apply to send messages. Successfully forwarded messages cost £1.50 per message.

MAYBE YOU'RE THE ONE?

Hi I'm Mandy, chocolate brown hair, blue eyes, 48, seeking human male (preferably) for nights out, socialising, clubbing, meals, lots of laughs and much more. Box 437489

JUST IMAGINE

Petite, brunette, bubbly, friendly, easygoing single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things, WLTW genuine male, to see where life takes us! Box 893562

BE MY GUY

Young 50s lady, slim, 5ft4, fair hair, a smoker, loves music, going out, cooking, gardening, seeking similar loving, caring, honest male. Box 449288

HERE AND NOW

Outgoing lady, 50, enjoys walks along the beach, nights out and in with a quiet bottle of wine, seeks man to love forever. Box 449524

CARING & PROFESSIONAL

Female 49, 5ft4, long hair, slim, likes eating out, the beach, travel, seeks a friendly chap, 48-55. Box 417100

OPENNESS AND HONESTY

I'm 52, curvy, lively, intelligent with sharp SOH, enjoy conversation, live music, eating out and cinema...looking for someone comfortable in his own skin. Box 873785

COMPANIONSHIP, LAUGHTER, MORE

Curvy & cuddly, outgoing, friendly, honest female, 53, 5ft7, larger build, fair hair, likes socialising, country walks, theatre, cinema, music, swimming, WLTW similar loving male. Box 443642

CUDDLY BUNDLE OF JOY

Loving caring homely lady, 54, honest, shy, likes gardening, long walks and more, looking for a fun-loving, passionate tactile man for nights out and more. Box 451967

DO YOU HAVE THE BRAINS & THE LOOKS?

Professional, attractive female, 54, enjoys the countryside, gardening, keeping fit, reading and live music, looking to meet an attractive and intelligent man for a relationship. Box 448863

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS!

Smart petite lady, 56, 5ft4, tall, blonde hair, green eyes, likes restaurants, theatre, cinema, travel abroad; seeking happy guy with similar interests. Box 444876

IN STITCHES!

Kind lady, in my 50's, blonde hair/hazel eyes, curvy build. I like cinema/theatre, walking, reading, cooking, gardening, sewing, meals out. WLTW similar gent. Maidstone. Box 451836

NOT ASKING FOR MUCH

Fun loving, bubbly, tactile lady, 50s, enjoys the good life, holidays and cosy nights in. I'm voluptuous & looking for a real man. Box 903560

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MOTORS NEWS



Mazda launches frugal new Ford Focus chaser

MAZDA has launched an all-new rival in the hard-fought family hatchback sector.

The latest Mazda3 (from £13,500) echoes the sharp styling of the bigger '6' model and gains new 2.2-litre performance diesel engines of 150PS (148bhp) and 185PS (182bhp) output.

Fuel economy is better by up to 16 per cent and CO2 emissions reduced by 19 per cent. Company car user choosers will like reduced Benefit in Kind liabilities.

The range is again offered in five-door and four-door formats.



Chrysler is marking 25 years in special style

CHRYSLER is celebrating the Grand Voyager's 25th anniversary with a special edition.

Already big on value, the £32,600 GV 'special' comes with extras including leather trimmed seats, dual screen rear DVD entertainment system and 'unconnect' GPS sat nav, Xenon headlamps and 'Bentley' style chrome mesh grille.

But the famous Stow 'n' Go system is standard, allowing the second and third row of seats to fold flat into the floor, offering extra luggage space.



Take the air for free on the sharp-suited Cruze

CHEVROLET is tipped to further boost market share with the forthcoming sharp-suited Cruze saloon, due to replace the ageing Lacetti in July.

The General Motors value brand is also drumming up advance interest by righting a glaring omission from an otherwise generous spec on the £11,545 Cruze 1.6S entry model – air con. Normally a £450 extra, this will be free on any Cruze ordered before August 31 and joins electronic stability control and follow-me-home lighting as major bonuses on this newcomer.



EYE-CATCHER: The MiTo sums up everything that's great about Alfa Romeo, taking in lines echoing that of the stunning Alfa 8C Competizione supercar and superb value for money

Alfa will challenge Mini with its own 'M-word'

MINI is the most fashionable name in motoring right now – especially as we celebrate 50 years since the birth of the original.

But the Mini icon has a formidable new style rival now that Alfa Romeo has uttered its own four-letter M-word.

The MiTo sums up everything great about Italy: the name mixes fashion capital Milano with resurgent motor city Torino, while the design draws the eye despite supermini dimensions and the whole evokes Alfa sporting heritage and tradition. Admittedly, the brand suffered a long flaky patch, but the MiTo says Alfa is back, albeit under ownership of a similarly reborn Fiat group.

After taking in lines echoing that of the stunning Alfa 8C Competizione supercar and a stylish cabin, you quickly realise this is a superb driver's car for the money.

Our top spec Veloce model featured the turbocharged 155bhp 1.4-litre petrol unit (£14,995). It sounds great and delivers 0-62mph in eight seconds towards a maximum 134mph, yet should average well over 40mpg.

ROAD TEST ALFA MITO

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

Such all-round appeal is enhanced by a sector-leading standard-fit package of selectable driver aids/modes under the somewhat cheesy abbreviation DNA – in this case, short for Dynamic, Normal and All-Weather.

'Dynamic' is what Alfa has always strived to stand for: quick, taut and responsive with the engine yelling to let you know it's with you all the way; 'Normal' does what it says on the tin, looking after you in busy traffic when more comfort is required; while 'All-Weather' gets you home in the sort of snowy conditions Kent experienced earlier in the year, by toning down throttle response and keeping you sensible... and on the road.

The MiTo is not the roomiest supermini though, but comes with a maximum five-star NCAP safety rating and generous specifications.

The range opens with an unblown 1.4-litre petrol at £11,795 and the perky diesels begin at £12,245. There is an evocative series of trim levels too; tell your mates you bought the Turismo and they probably won't have clue that you bought the cooking version, Lusso doesn't sound half bad even if it is the halfway house, while Veloce sounds just right for a famous sporting brand. Looks best in red or black though.



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BY STEVE LOADER @
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07 56 CORSA 1-4 DESIGN 5 DR AUTO PAS SILVER 9000 MILES.....	£7995
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06 06 CORSA 1-4 DESIGN 3 DR AUTO PAS ULTRA BLUE 8000MILES.....	£6495
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05 54 YARIS 1-3 T SPIRIT 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS SILVER 6000 MILES.....	£7995
03 03 YARIS 1-3 GLS 3 DR AUTO PAS CARLO BLUE SUNROOF 24000 MILES.....	£4995
00 W RAV4 REEBOK LTD EDITION 5DR AUTO PAS SUNROOF 24000 MILES.....	£3995

NISSAN

07 57 NISSAN NOTE TEKNA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR BLUE 1500 MILES.....	£9995
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06 06 NISSAN MICRA 1-2 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 22000 MILES.....	£6495
06 06 NISSAN MICRA 1-2 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C RED 21000 MILES.....	£6495
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02 02 NISSAN MICRA 1-0 S 5 DR AUTO PAS SILVER MOSS 21000 MILES.....	£3695

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01 51 ROVER 45 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C NIGHTFIRE RED 35000 MILES.....	£2995

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08 57 CHEVROLET MATIZ 8-0 SE AUTO PAS BLUE 5DR 13000 MILES.....	£5695
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07 07 CHEVROLET TACUMA 2-0 CDX AUTO PAS AIR MET BLUE 4000 MILES.....	£4995
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04 04 VW LUPO 1-4 E 3DR AUTO PAS SILVER JUST 4000 MILES.....	£5495
99 V VW GOLF 1-9 TURBO DIESEL SE AUTO PAS MET GREEN 53000 MILES.....	£3995

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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

AFFORDABLE MPVs

JUST a few years ago, a new breed of van-based budget people carriers suffered from a 'Postman Pat' image. But the recession has brought realism in place of image-conscious consumerism. Many hard-pressed families realise models like those featured here can be far cheaper to run than a specialist people carrier. Small businesses love them too, because these workhorses can switch from a midweek van role to weekend family holdall, with sliding rear doors for easy access. Top-notch diesel options make them reliable and good on fuel too.

FIAT DOBLO



NOT the greatest looking MPV, but the Doblo probably offers more space to the pound than any other. Odd looks disguise surprisingly good handling and comfort, with easy access via two rear sliding doors. Fiat diesel technology makes it attractive too, although it is best to go for the top of the range 103bhp turbodiesel to get anything like decent acceleration with a load – it hits 60mph in 12.6 seconds compared with the entry level 1.2 petrol version's 19 seconds.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

RENAULT KANGOO



RENAULT invented the MPV thing with the Espacé and then the Scenic, so the French marque was bound to compete in the budget sector. The Kangoo is both spacious and comfortable, with a pliant ride. It is available – at a premium price – with a lively 80bhp diesel, although petrol options are competent too. Rear sliding doors add to the car's huge high roof space efficiency and flexibility and there are 4x4 Trekka (pictured) versions if you need the extra traction.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

PEUGEOT PARTNER COMBI/CITROËN BERLINGO MULTISPACE



WE cheated on numbers this week, but these two models are virtually identical clones even if the Citroën (pictured) is more common due to keener prices and higher sales when new. Probably the most refined if not the most spacious models in this class, most versions are pleasant to drive and ride in though the legendary power and refinement of their PSA diesels will most tempt growing families, dog lovers or people needing to load up for a sporty lifestyle.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

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Lineage
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Steering, Elec
Windows, ABS,
30,000 Miles,
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p/wk

3x1
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Senior & General Appointments 58-60

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We currently have vacancies for one permanent and two temporary Benefit Officers. The temporary posts will be offered as one year contracts.

Based at Sittingbourne, but sometimes working at one of our three district offices in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness, the main responsibilities of this role will be to check, calculate and maintain Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims and give face to face or telephone advice to the public on all matters relating to those benefits and also Council Tax account issues.

It is essential that you are either educated to GCSE standard at grade C including Maths and English, or an equivalent qualification such as NVQ level 2 in a subject area such as Business and Finance or Administration, or that you have at least 2 years' experience in a related area of work such as a customer service or financial administration environment, preferably within Housing Benefit or other Social Security Benefit role.

You must be able to show good computer keyboard skills and knowledge of Microsoft Office packages would be an advantage.

We are looking for people who have good communication and team working skills and the ability to learn quickly. A comprehensive training programme will be provided to develop your skills and knowledge.

The starting salary will be dependent upon qualifications and experience.

We welcome applications for flexible working arrangements.

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For further information contact Human Resources, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT. Telephone Sittingbourne (01795) 417414 (24 hour voice mail) quoting reference number 477CS1.

E-Mail: hr@swale.gov.uk Website: <http://jobs.swale.gov.uk>

Closing date: 26 May 2009
Interviews: w/c 8 June 2009



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Public Rights of Way Officer (Enforcement)

£20,262 - £30,259 (Salary dependent on experience and progression through the Career Grade is based on the fulfilment of required competencies)
Initially on a two year fixed term contract
Maidstone

Joining our Public Rights of Way Team, you will have considerable proven experience of Public Rights of Way or enforcement along with the ability to apply that experience in a pragmatic way to a range of challenging situations. You will be able to investigate reported breaches, prepare case papers and present evidence in Court to the highest standard and be able to develop similar skills in those around you.

Communicating the requirements of the law effectively to a diverse range of groups with the intention of reducing the number of offences being reported is also required.

With your excellent organisation and communication skills, you will juggle numerous competing priorities and adapt readily to the use of new technology.

You will be a team player, with either considerable proven experience of working within PROW or enforcement or be educated to HND or degree level in a related subject. Ref: ER/09/0049

These posts are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Criminal Records Bureau.

For more information on the posts above call Graham Ridding on 01622 696995.

To apply, visit www.kent.gov.uk/jobs Alternatively, please email recruitment.line@kent.gov.uk or call 01622 824790. Please quote the appropriate reference number

Closing date: Midday, 4th June 2009.

Public Rights of Way Officer (Asset Management Delivery):

Starting salary £20,262
1 year fixed term appointment with possible extension subject to funding
West Malling

The Countryside Access Service is looking for a new officer to join them to deliver capital maintenance programmes across the county. A substantial proportion of the network sits within the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

You will be joining a busy West Kent PROW Team, and will prepare and supervise programmes of capital works. Working closely with landowners, local councils and other agencies to secure all necessary consents and permissions, the post carries a high-volume workload so you will need to be able to juggle numerous competing priorities and adapt readily to the use of new technology.

A team player, and competent to NVQ3 level in civil engineering/contract management/estate management, you will be able to demonstrate the same level of competency in a similar related area. The post also requires a high level of motivation, a good knowledge of rights of way law and practice and excellent organisational and communication skills. Ref: ER/09/0049



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Saint George's C of E School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks.

Please contact us to request further details and an application form.
 Email dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk or visit our website www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk and click on the 'Job Vacancies' link. Candidates will be invited for an informal interview upon receipt of application.

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This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

For an application pack, please write to/telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):
 Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP
 (01634 338224)

Please note CV's will not be accepted. Closing date: 3.6.2009

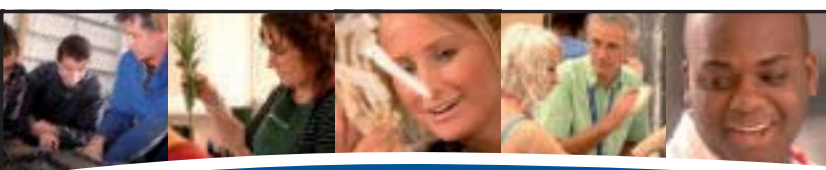
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 This position is currently temporary with a possible permanent placement for September.

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Interested: Please forward your CV to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk or call him on 07725 128661 (after 12th May) for an informal discussion.

A full Job Description/Person Specification and application can be seen at www.midkent.ac.uk

Closing Date: 25th May 2009

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Please forward completed applications to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk and/or call Ken Pullan on 07725 128661 for an informal discussion on any of these positions.

Closing date: 1st June 2009

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CRICKET

BY GLENN PEARSON

Kent Cricket League Division Five
Bapchild 1st XI v Blackheath 3rd XI

A VALIANT effort from skipper Ben Fulton prevented Bapchild slipping to defeat against Blackheath 3rds.

The home side's captain hit 87, which included 12 fours, to deny Blackheath who ended up just one wicket away from claiming victory.

Having decided to put the opposition in to bat, Bapchild were immediately rewarded when opener Steve Turner was ousted by opening bowler Adam Larking. Joe Ryan and Hamish Purdey put on 60 for the second wicket to help steady the ship, before Jack Ford hit a measured 60 in the middle of the innings to help his side register a gettable score of 201 for eight from 50 overs. Alan Hampton (3 for 53) and Matthew Roche (2 for 43) were among the wickets and were aided by some tight bowling from Matt Lewis who conceded just ten runs from his four overs.

In reply, Bapchild lost opener Lee Cogger early on for just three, but a partnership of 82 between John Heatley (35) and Fulton looked to have given the home side a platform to go on and win the game. Bowler Morgan Mahoney then ripped the heart out of the Bapchild batting line-up, claiming figures of 6 for 52. When Fulton was out 13 short of a deserved century, the game looked up, but the home side's tail end held firm to deny Blackheath a win.

Bapchild skipper Fulton is thorn in Heath's side



CLOSE: Bapchild wicketkeeper John Heatley (centre) celebrates a wicket in a tight game with Blackheath 3rds at the weekend

SCOREBOARD

Blackheath

	Runs
Steve Turner ct Harrison b Larking	0
Joe Ryan b Roche	24
Hamish Purdey ct Larking b Fulton	47
Matt Orford ct Larking b Hampton	0
Jack Ford b Roche	60
Simon Martin ct Lewis b Hampton	4
Deepesh Khatri run out	22
James Martin b Hampton	37
Richard Wyatt not out	1
Morgan Mahoney not out	1
Daniel Carter did not bat	

Extras (3b 2lb) 5
Total (8 wickets, 50 overs) 201

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Matt Lewis	4	2	10	0
Adam Larking	8	1	29	1
Lincoln Bryden	7	1	39	0
Matthew Roche	15	0	43	2
Alan Hampton	13	1	53	3
Ben Fulton	3	0	18	1

Bapchild

	Runs
John Heatley ct b Turner	35
Lee Cogger b Carter	3
Ben Fulton c & b b Mahoney	87
Alan Hampton lbw b Mahoney	12
Adam Larking b Mahoney	9
Timothy Harrison ct b Mahoney	3
Lincoln Bryden b Mahoney	7
Matt Lewis ct b Mahoney	8
Ricky Dale b Khatri	0
Matthew Roche not out	0
Cameron Archbold not out	2

Extras 9
Total (9 wickets, 50 overs) 175

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Daniel Carter	5	3	18	1
James Martin	11	2	28	0
Matt Orford	7	1	24	0
Morgan Mahoney	14	1	52	6
Steve Turner	5	1	22	1
Deepesh Khatri	8	1	26	1

LOCAL CRICKET ROUND-UP

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION**Gore Court CC 1st XI v**
Tunbridge Wells CC 1st XI

GORE Court lost their second match in as many weeks after going down by 93 runs against Tunbridge Wells.

Geoffrey Paulsen's 124 helped Wells to 256 for 7 from 55 overs, with Phil Edwards (2 for 27) and Alamgir Sheriyyar (3 for 40) the pick of the Court attack.

Richard Piesley scored 36 and Christian Marsh hit an unbeaten 64 for Court, but it wasn't enough as they were bowled out for a meagre 163.

Tunbridge Wells

	Runs
Mark Alexander	0
Will Sticker	0
Geoffrey Paulsen	124
Jack Richardson	18
Mark Smith	2
Oliver Priestman	58
Richard Cutts	32
Sam Sticker	4
Simon Routh	1
Chris Fenwick	1
Chris Lawrence	1
Extras (13b 2lb 1w 1nb)	17
Total (7 wickets, 55 overs)	256

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Philip Edwards	7	3	27	2
Alamgir Sheriyyar	10	1	40	3
Karl Pearson	15	0	46	0
Chris Piesley	12	0	52	1
Dave Crompton	5	0	31	1
Alex Edwards	6	0	45	0

Gore Court

	Runs
Richard Piesley	36
Karl Pearson	24
Dominic Campbell	0
Chris Piesley	3
Kevin Jones	4
Christian Marsh	64
Philip Edwards	11
Alamgir Sheriyyar	11
Rob Slater	3
Alex Edwards	1
Dave Crompton	1
Extras (2lb 1w 2nb)	5
Total (all out, 45.4 overs)	163

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Chris Lawrence	8	2	26	0
Chris Fenwick	8	1	51	0
Mark Smith	9.4	2	27	5
Oliver Priestman	15	3	35	5
Geoffrey Paulsen	5	1	22	0

KENT LEAGUE DIVISION THREE**Catford Wanderers CC 1st XI v**
Minster CC 1st XI

MINSTER made it back-to-back victories with a five-wicket win at Catford Wanderers.

South African Nathan Nichol (5 for 38) and Martin Hammond (4 for 52) blew away the home sides batting line-up, as Catford were all out for 102 inside 32 overs.

Minster didn't have it all their own way as they lost Mark Tucker (10), Brad Mitchell (7), Andy Hosken (5) and Joe O'Donoghue (13) early on, but Neil Hosken (36) and Craig O'Donoghue (22 not out) saw them home with more than 22 overs to spare.

Catford Wanderers

	Runs
Marlon Beach	3
Remi Chea	15
Ashley Forde	0
Bradley Rose	33
Jack Haslam	33
Selwin Kulararathnam	4
Paul Brooks	0
Navin Panwar	0
Larry Surajit	2
Nanda Pelpola	0
Smith	1
Extras (1b 7w 1nb)	9
Total (all out, 31.4 overs)	102

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Nathan Nichol	15	4	38	5
Martin Hammond	15	3	52	4
Mark Tucker	1	0	11	0
James White	0.4	0	1	1

Minster

	Runs
Brad Mitchell	7
Mark Tucker	10
Andy Hosken	5
Joe O'Donoghue	13
Neil Hosken	36
Craig O'Donoghue	22
Jordan Weller	8
Callum Hughes	0
James White	0
Nathan Nichol	0
Martin Hammond	0
Extras (2lb 1lb 5w 1nb)	9
Total (5 wickets, 27.2 overs)	105

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Ashley Forde	4	0	16	0
Larry Surajit	11	5	34	3
Paul Brooks	8	2	25	1
Nanda Pelpola	2.2	1	14	1
Jack Haslam	2	0	13	0

KENT LEAGUE DIVISION THREE**Old Colfeians CC 1st XI v**
Upchurch CC 1st XI

UPCHURCH ensured it was two wins out of two at the start of the season with a four-wicket win at Old Colfeians.

Having been inserted, Old Colfs were bowled out for 154 with youngster Daniel Parker claiming excellent figures of 4 for 31.

In reply, Upchurch slumped to 62 for 5 with the majority of their best batsmen back in the hutch, but a 62-run partnership between Michael Hales (39) and Adam Hodder (22 not out) helped them over the line.

Old Colfeians

	Runs
Doug Cratton	42
Richard Harmer	27
Vishal Sawhney	11
Travis Houston	6
Mark Quilter	39
Irfan Begg	17
Paul Gaston	0
Tom Gale	0
Christopher Tarrant	1
Aj Bahra	0
Russell Humm	2
Extras (1b 2lb 4w 2nb)	9
Total (all out, 48.3 overs)	154

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Daniel Parker	9.3	0	31	4
Craig Bewick	13	1	52	1
Adam Hodder	15	2	27	2
Tim Mullis	11	2	41	1

Uchurch

	Runs
Jim Phillips	0
Alan Collis	7
Andrew Shirley	14
Lee Taylor	5
Michael Hales jnr	15
Michael Hales	39
Adam Hodder	22
Daniel Parker	20
Dean Headley	0
Craig Bewick	0
Tim Mullis	0
Extras (13b 5lb 16w 1nb)	35
Total (6 wickets, 41.3 overs)	157

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Paul Gaston	10	2	26	1
Aj Bahra	8	1	26	3
Russell Humm	10	2	32	0
Irfan Begg	7.3	1	27	1
Tom Gale	6	0	28	1

KENT LEAGUE DIVISION FIVE**Farningham CC 1st XI v**
Macknade CC 1st XI

MACKNADE tied their game on the last ball at Farningham at the weekend.

Jamie Rigden took four wickets for the Faversham side, while Kaylem Short and James Jarrett each claimed two wickets to restrict Farningham to 206 for 8 from 50 overs.

Macknade slumped to 57 for 4 before skipper Lee Rigden steadied the ship with 47. It was then left to Jonathan Holmans (55 not out) to see Macknade close to the total as he and last batsman Darryl Cook ensured the game was tied.

Farningham

	Runs
Graham Cuthbertson	6
James Wiles	2
Neal Pittman	73
Hadleigh Wiles	1
Darren Blake	41
Simon Price	15
Shafiq Khan	5
Steven Franklin	1
Philip Franklin	30
Oliver Powell	10
Andrew Norman	0
Extras (11b 5lb 6w)	22
Total (8 wickets, 50 overs)	206

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Kaylem Short	13	3	56	2
James Jarrett	10	0	62	2
Jamie Rigden	15	6	42	4
Darryl Cook	12	0	30	0

Macknade

	Runs
Steve Taylor	3
Kaylem Short	27
Andrew Machin	2
James Juniper	3
Scott Davenport	26
Lee Rigden	47
Jonathan Holmans	55
Ian Juniper	5
Jamie Rigden	1
James Jarrett	5
Darryl Cook	17
Extras (2b 3lb 8w 2nb)	15
Total (9 wickets, 50 overs)	206

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
James Wiles	15	3	40	1
Simon Price	15	5	43	2
Graham Cuthbertson	12	2	62	3
Andrew Norman	4	1	20	0
Oliver Powell	4	0	36	

Shakey's luck in South Africa is just the pits

Picture: STERILGARDIA DUCATI



PROBLEMS: Shane Byrne continues to have issues with his bike in South Africa

MORE problems with the Ducati bike prevented Shane Byrne making any sort of lasting impression in the latest round of the World Superbike Championship in South Africa.

The Sheppey born superbike star started from 14th in the grid in Kyalami at the weekend and thanks to a good start, found himself in 11th up to the 12th lap.

However, by the second half of the race the bike started chattering in the back due to the tyre spinning on the wheel. He kept his cool as he managed to gain two more positions and finished

SUPERBIKES

the race ninth after overtaking Tom Sykes, but was first among the non-official riders.

In race two, Byrne was forced to return to the pits as the accelerator wire broke and prevented him from scoring another good result.

He said: "I'm satisfied with race one although my performance was influenced by a problem I had with the back tyre that was chattering. It was completely destroyed at the end of the race. I did however score a good

result that I could've replicated in race two, but another problem forced me to get back to the pits."

Sterilgarda Ducati team manager Marco Borciani believes the team need some luck if they are to get anything out of the championship.

He said: "In this early stage of the season, it seems like we're not lucky at all. I've never heard of an accelerator wire break in the middle of the race but it did happen and so we couldn't finish race two."

Byrne is back in action at Miller Park in the USA in two week's time.

HOCKEY



VICTORIOUS: Gore Court won the Kent Vets Cup

Revenge is sweet as Court claim Vets Cup

Gore Court Vets 4 Canterbury Vets 1

GORE Court gained sweet revenge on local rivals Canterbury in the final of the Kent Vets Cup following defeat against them in last year's final.

Early on it looked like this might not be the case as Canterbury started the stronger and only excellent defensive work by Paul Birch, Paul Nicholls and Mike Bishop kept them at bay. Eventually the pressure told and the visitors took the lead from a well-worked short corner and it was nearly two when a cross shot was completely missed by a Canterbury forward in front of an unguarded goal.

Court soon found their stride and parity was restored when a mazy run and cross from Ashley Hooker was coolly finished by Tim Clark at the far post. This galvanised Court into an excellent passage of play with the midfield trio of Eves, Wanstall and Cornett gaining the upper hand. Reward for this period of dominance came just before half-time when a short corner found Hooker who fired into the net from a tight angle. The start of the second half was much more evenly contested, with chances few and far between.

As the game wore on, Court piled the pressure on their opponents and after a blistering run from Rod Lewis, he slipped the ball to Clive Jenkins who rolled it into an empty net.

The last quarter was all Court and the scoreline was given a more realistic look when a clumsy challenge in the D on Lewis led to a penalty stroke, calmly dispatched by Neil Wanstall.

FOOTBALL

■ BY GLENN PEARSON

NORTON Sports chairman Colin Page has confirmed the club are looking to relocate back to Swale ahead of the new season.

The villagers, who finished 11th in their debut season in the Kent League, are hoping to move back to the area in a bid to attract more supporters and have plans in place to move to Woodstock Park in Sittingbourne.

Norton, who are a year into a three-year groundshare deal with Herne Bay, are in the process of applying to put floodlights and stands at Woodstock, which is near the Kent Science Park, but are in a race against time to get the work signed off in time for the start of the season.

Page, who took Norton into the Kent League for the first time in the club's history, told Yourswale that the aim has always been to relocate.

"The aim has always been to get back towards Sittingbourne," he said. "The players are all local and it's important to us that we get back as a local entity. A lot of people have said to us that they would come and have a look at us if we were back in the area, but it's a lot to ask to drive half an hour up the road each time to Herne Bay.

"Whether we can relocate in time is up to the Kent League and us having everything in place. I would say it's looking dubious at the moment as getting things in like floodlights take time, so it's going to be difficult."

Page also strongly denied the club were looking to groundshare with Sittingbourne at Bourne Park, despite rumours on fans' forums. Norton had hoped to move to Bourne Park in their first year in the Kent League, but Sittingbourne's agreement with Maidstone United meant Norton had to look elsewhere. They spent a successful period at Herne Bay's Winch's Field last season and will play there again in the next campaign if the Woodstock Park ground isn't ready in time.

Manager Ben Taylor is expecting to keep hold of all of his players for the new season, but any new recruits will depend on whether the club have moved to Woodstock.

Norton are also hoping to confirm pre-season friendlies with Ryman League sides Chatham Town, Whitstable Town and Folkestone Invicta.



GAFFER: Norton manager Ben Taylor expects to keep all his players for the new season unless the club relocates

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